Daily Report

Latin America

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Cuba

Castro Returns From Venezuela Visit 5 Feb

FL0602223289 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 5 Feb 89

[Text] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, first secretary of the PCC Central Committee and president of the Councils of State and Ministers, arrived in Cuba early this morning after attending the inauguration of Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez.

He was greeted at the airport by Army General Raul Castro, second secretary of the PCC Central Committee; other members of the Central Committee, Secretariat, and the PCC Politburo; officers of the FAR and MININT [Ministry of the Interior]; and government and state officials.

Arriving with the leader of the revolution was the delegation that accompanied him to the ceremony in Caracas. Fidel gave his impressions of that important event and of his dealings with the people of Simon Bolivar's nation.

This is Fidel's third trip to Latin America in less than a year. The previous visits were to attend the inaugurations of the presidents of Ecuador and Mexico.

Backs Colombian Peace Efforts

PA0602172289 Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1215 GMT 6 Feb 89

[Text] Upon returning from Venezuela, where he attended Social Democrat Carlos Andres Perez' presidential inauguration, Cuban President Fidel Castro told reporters that he had spoken with Colombian President Virgilio Barco in Caracas and had wished him success in the peace efforts his government has undertaken.

"If there is anything Cuba can do to contribute to your peace efforts, you may rest assured that you will not be denied that help," Castro told a Caracol reporter who had asked his opinion of the Colombian peace process.

"It is my heartfelt wish that you find peace, and I sincerely mean that," Castro said. He pointed out that the Cuban and Spanish Governments had been instrumental in promoting and organizing a meeting between the M-19 and former Colombian President Belisario Betancur 4 years ago in Madrid, and concluded by stating: "We will do whatever we can to help."

Cooperation Agreement With 'Palestinian State'

FL0602192089 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 6 Feb 89

[Text] With the establishment of the Embassy of the Palestinian State in Havana, the first in our continent, the tradition of Cuban solidarity with the Palestinian brothers continues.

Cuba was the first Latin American country to have official representation of the PLO and one of the first to recognize the new Palestinian State that was formed last 15 November. Relations are being consolidated today with the signing of a joint economic and scientific-technical cooperation agreement between the two countries.

[Begin recording of Ahmad Abu 'Ala, minister of the Palestinian State, identified by caption, in vernacular with simultaneous Spanish translation] This is no more than an expression of the nature of the relations which unite Palestinians and Cubans, who have been developing cooperation in all areas. For our part, we will continue to pursue the development of relations between the two peoples. At this moment, we insist that contacts increase so that the possibility of recognizing the Palestinian State also increases. We also hope that Latin American countries are among the countries where we will find support for the proclamation of the Palestinian State. Undoubtedly, Cuba will play an important role in supporting this initiative. [end recording]

Roa on U.S. Delegate to UN Rights Commission

PA0602195389 Havana International Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 1 Feb 89

[Interview with Raul Roa, vice minister of foreign relations, by Julio Dominguez during 45th session of UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, Switzerland—recorded]

[Text] [Dominguez] Comrade Vice Minister, we would like to know the most important topics to be discussed at the 45th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights underway in Geneva.

[Roa] Well, among the most important topics to be discussed during the meeting are those dealing with the occupied Arab territories, the impact of apartheid in South Africa, the situation in Namibia, and, of course, the reports on human rights violations in El Salvador and Guatemala. We will also discuss the prople's right to self-determination and so on. I believe these are the most important topics that should receive attention this year by the UN Commission on Human Rights.

[Dominguez] During a recent news conference, Jan Martenson, director of the UN Commission on Human Rights, said that Cuba had not exerted any pressure on the working group in charge of drafting a report on his recent visit to Cuba. He added that the only source of pressure would be countries that are very interested in what the report has to say.

[Roa] Well, it is obvious that Cuba is not exerting any pressure on the members of the delegation that visited Cuba. Members of the delegation would not deny this. Just like Martenson said, Cuba is not the one exerting pressure; perhaps he was referring to the empire [the United States], since it usually tries to exert pressure on the world.

[Dominguez] Vice Minister, some observers cannot understand why the United States is bent on sending former Batista policeman Armando Valladares as its ambassador to the UN Commission on Human Rights; that man has a terrorist background and he was a complete failure during the last meeting of the commission. What do you think about this?

[Roa] I do not understand what prompted the United States to appoint former Batista policeman Valladares as head of the U.S. delegation to Geneva. First, Valladares has a notorious reputation as a former policeman during the Batista tyranny; second, he is a convicted terrorist. Valladares, together with a group of counterrevolutionaries, were tried in Cuba, found guilty of terrorist activities, and sentenced. What we must ask ourselves is whether the appointment is the result of the close ties between U.S. leaders and the Cuban worms who finance the U.S. Republican Party's policy. We must ask ourselves if this is the only reason, if this is the U.S. leader's way of rewarding the rich worms who donate money for the Republican Party's campaigns. Perhaps that is the answer. Another explanation could be that the new U.S Administration wishes to continue the confrontational policy practiced by the Reagan administration in Latin America.

[Dominguez] Meanwhile, the Latin American people ask themselves whether the appointment of Valladares—a notorious terrorist, an inept person, and a former Batista policeman—as head of the U.S. delegation has political significance.

Castro Speech at Child Care Centers Inauguration

FL0402162789 Havana Television Cubana Network in Spanish 2200 GMT 28 Jan 89

[Speech by President Fidel Castro at the ceremony to inaugurate over 50 child care centers in Havana—live]

[Text] Comrades: As it has been already said here, we are inaugurating 54—to say it with absolute accuracy—no [corrects himself], 52 child care centers are being inaugurated today. Are they 52? Let's get the figure right. Fifty-two are being inaugurated. Three were inaugurated earlier. So, the total is 55. Two more will be completed in a few hours. The outside areas and a stairway need to be completed but they will be finished in the next few days. We are inaugurating today even those two that will be completed in a few hours because we are not going to have a special ceremony for them. [chuckles; applause]

You can be absolutely certain that minibrigade workers are going to complete them within the next few days because the only things left are the finishing touches. With the exception of eight, all of them have been inaugurated with the children in place. I understand that only eight child care centers are not operating yet because construction has just been completed. All of them will be operating at the beginning of February.

It was also said here that—counting this one—111 child care centers have been built. The original plan included 100 child care centers. One hundred child care centers were planned because there was an unmet and growing need for children to attend child care centers. The demand had been building up. At that time, when the question was raised about how many child care center slots were needed, it was determined that 19,500 were needed. So, we decided to build 100 child care centers. The problem should be solved with these. One hundred child care centers were planned with room for 210 children each. This would result in 21,000 slots.

The movement became stronger. There is some uncertainty about these figures because this is a variable need that could grow. Four more child care centers were built last year. It was agreed to build 54 more. The program was overfulfilled in 1988. Actually, the 1988 program took a few more days to complete. Not all of the centers were completed by 31 December and it took several days in January to complete; nevertheless, the program was also overfulfilled. Fifty-seven child care centers were built: 56 of them were of the regular kind, or normal ones with an enrollement of 210 children. The 57th one is a small child care center—yes, the 57th one—which is located in an area of the genetic engineering and biotechnology center. This one has an enrollment of between 40 and 50. They tell me that this child care center turned out very well. I have not seen it but, out of the 57, this one is the smallest.

Out of the 111, 110 are of the regular kind with room for 210 children. Places for some additional 24,000 children were created. This was a high figure. There were existing facilities for about 40,000. I think the figure did not reach 40,000. It was 39,000. There were 300-odd child care centers of all types built throughout the revolution. A few of the child care centers were planned for those purposes. Many others were adapted houses and installations. This is why if each of the 300 child care centers or so had had room for 210 children, enrollment would have been between 60,000 and 70,000. There are all types and sizes of child care centers among the old ones.

This time the revolution is able to come up with a program with blueprints specially designed for child care centers, taking into account all the experience accumulated in this area throughout the years of the revolution. This is how the blueprints for the first 54 child care centers were drafted. Nevertheless, since any project is always subject to improvement, some improvements were introduced in these 1989 blueprints using the experience of the child care centers built in 1987; in fact, the ones that were built in 1988 already had some improvements. They are standard institutions. In this way, one knows the number each needs, the number of workers it should have, the role each one plays [words indistinct] the type of installations, the way they should operate, and the room they should have.

A big step in quality has been taken by being able to create the almost 24,000 slots in standard installations. The comrade [not further identified] said earlier that the other centers used to have an average staff based on the old payroll. They had 57 workers for each child care center. Now each child care center has 48 workers. This doesn't mean that more cuts couldn't be made. Child care centers could operate with even less staff. We have not focused much on this because it involves an important area such as the care of children.

We have preferred to have a higher payroll than we should, for the sake of optimizing the care of children, for the sake of quality. We are not talking about offices or other kinds of facilities where we could easily make cuts. We are doing that in many factories and other places. We are discovering real miracles in cutbacks, extraordinary...[siren heard in background]

What's that sound? [crowd response indistinct] There are three or four of them, they are making a lot of noise. Well...[crowd murmur] Are those firemen? If they are firemen, we can't criticize them. If it is someone sick, we can't criticize them either for making noise. [unidentified speaker makes indistinct comment] When does the game begin? [laughter] I promise to finish before the game, don't worry. I will finish in enough time for you to go home, sit and (?watch it). If the firemen need help, we could go help them put out the fire. [speaker confirms they are firemen] There aren't any child care centers there in [word indistinct] right? [speaker answers: "No"; second speaker adds indistinct comment] The noise started when I began talking about the payroll. [laughter] Some day, I should go pay a visit to those firemen and see how their payroll is. [laughter] It seems everything is well there, and they don't need more personnel. [laughter] I think we must be surrounded by fire. [laughter] I don't think there was so much noise even in Angola.

We were saying that we did not want to be too strict with this matter. A child care center has to be open approximtely 12 hours. It must be ready to be open up to 12 hours. The care of approximatly 200 children is a job which requires a lot of dedication and special effort. It is not an ordinary job. The quality of its services cannot slacken at any moment. Despite everything, some deductions have been made. The mere fact that we have standard child care centers helps a lot in their organization and management. The problems that arise in one center are the same as in another.

Maybe, some day, we will start eliminating some mini and small child care centers. Some day, but not now. Right now, we cannot do away with a single one. But we can continue building standard centers. Anyway, the ones that are built in the future will also be done in this fashion. That is how we will standardize the centers. I think these institutions are truly excellent. They have been well built. I think this year's centers will be better. The construction forces had more experience than in the first year when they had such an ambitious program to fulfill.

I think these institutions have every requirement to render the necessary services to the population. The personnel is really well trained. I think that the education sector in Havana Province deserves recognition for the efforts they have made in the selection and training of personnel. We have been training child care center teachers for several years. At the beginning, we had schools specializing in this area. Afterward, the responsibility for training them went to the teacher training schools. Today, we train them at teacher training schools. When you speak to each one of the workers in these centers, you will find very well trained personnel. It is truly a pleasure to speak with the personnel. They are educators who have studied, or assistants who have taken courses, or even people who teach music, for example. I have seen many of them. I have seen how they get children to learn several music pieces in a short time. This is really impressive.

Of course, in reference to the training program for the country's teaching personnel, it is a matter of increasing improvement. Before, people would enroll to become primary school teachers with a sixth grade education. That was during the early years of the revolution. Enrollment has increased enormously. Sixty percent of the primary school teachers did not have a degree a that time. A great push was later made in all schools for primary school teachers in the provinces until there was a high availability of primary school teachers. There was also a big drive to train basic secondary school and preuniversity teachers. Despite this advanced group of people, we had to train more and more teachers.

The situation in primary school education is relatively comfortable now. We have a reserve, a reserve [repeats himself], of 18,000 teachers. This allows our teachers to attend school. We thus have new waves of students. This will allow us to develop advanced programs for primary school teachers in the future. This is what has allowed us to enroll tens of thousands of them in the universities to get their degrees in primary education.

As I was telling you earlier, they enrolled after sixth grade. After a while, when we had students at the secondary school level, people would enroll for teacher training after ninth grade. Before that, they would enroll after 6 years of schooling, ninth grade [corrects himself] sixth grade. They had 5 years of studies and finished six grades. They enrolled after finishing six grades.

Later, they enrolled after finishing 9 grades and 4 years of teacher training courses. Now we have increased that to 5 years. We have added another year so that primary school teachers can be trained in the arts education of children. This is also another quality step. Each of these teachers devotes an entire year so that they can assume

the children's arts education. We are not able to train specialists in this field alone. It would require an enormous number of personnel. From our point of view, it has to be these same teachers. They are the most suitable people for that task but they have to receive special training. Once again, those who finish 9th grade, those who enroll after finishing 9 grades, study 5 years to become primary school teachers.

A course of studies has been created for this in the universities and, as I was saying, tens of thousands are studying for a degree in this area.

Nevertheless, an additional step has been taken. We have begun to enroll preuniversity students in schools for primary school teachers. They have finished 12th grade. In 3 or 4 years, 100 percent of those who enroll in schools for primary school teachers will be preuniversity students and they will study 5 years. They will graduate with a degree in primary school education. I'm explaining this to you to give you an idea of the constant concern for better teacher training.

Now we're talking about the child care centers. Education begins with the child care centers. They exert a tremendous influence in the development of the human personality, in the development of children, the education of children. I said last year that I feel the child care center is as important as a university. By the time a person reaches the university, his intelligence is developed. He is trained. He has developed. However, during these years in the child care center, a child's training, intelligence is being developed.

In a university, one receives information, training. In the child care center, one helps develop the children's intelligence. That is a very important, decisive age and this has been proven scientifically. Professionals are trained in the universities and in the child care centers; intelligence is developed. That is why I say that the day those generations become university professionals, there is no doubt that, for many reasons, they will have a very superior training in comparison to those who are graduating from the universities now. However, we have to begin with the child care center.

Nevertheless, primary, secondary, preuniversity, preuniversity [repeats himself] education, and technological education is very important. As we train more capable teachers and professors, education in our country will become better. This is very important, above all in the child care center. Fortunately, we have collectives in the child care centers with personnel that is very well trained and we have to continue on this road.

What's more, our country can truly become a laboratory, a true research center for children's lives, for techniques and methods to improve the children's intelligence. I believe that few countries have the conditions to do what we are doing with all of these institutions.

All right now, in the capital we have satisfied the demand for child care centers. However, I'm not going to say that these demands have been met 100 percent. I asked the comrade of the PCC in Plaza Municipality how many centers had been built here within the last 2 years. She told me that nine centers had been built. Keep in mind that Plaza is not one of the poorer municipalities. I said: What is the situation now? She said: From the third level on, the demand has been met, but it has not been met in the first and second levels. There is still a deficit in these areas. This means that there is a new crop of children being born or that there is a new wave of pregnant mothers going into the workforce. The comrade said: Perhaps since the situation with the centers has been solved, the availability of places might have increased. I said: No, those children were already on the way and were expected. [laughter] This situation has to do with other demographic factors. In general, the number of births has gone up. The specialists would have to explain these factors. However, as a result we have had increased demand in these two levels.

The demand is never met 100 percent; there will always be new demands. We will try to make sure that the needs and demands never accumulate as they did during the past years. These were years in which practically no centers were built. When we said that there were a series of negative tendencies that needed to be corrected, one of the tendencies we were referring to was this one. Child care centers were not given importance. People considered them a place of entertainment or a luxury. It was not well understood that the centers were a chance to incorporate thousands and tens of thousands of women—active and well-prepared women—into production and services. A center like this means that 210 mothers can hold jobs as doctors, nurses, technicians, teachers, engineers, or highly skilled workers. They could not go to work if it weren't for these centers.

From an economic point of view, a child care center is not a luxury; it is useful and helps in the social development and the economic development of a country. We all know many people who could not work if weren't for child care centers. Child care centers are a solution to this important need.

As I said, we have built 19,500 child care centers. We have advanced so much in the past 2 years that now we can have the luxury of decreasing the rate at which the centers are being built. This year, 1989, we are going to build five of them. However, we will continue to keep an eye on the situation. If in 1990 we need to build 8, 10, 12, or 15 additional centers—I don't think we will, because we have had a colossal program—we will build whatever is necessary. But, the fact that we worked so hard on this program gives us the luxury of slowing down now.

Also, there is the fact that this year we will finish all 20 of the planned polyclinics—there is a slight delay in the construction of the polyclinics: of the 20, there are about 8 finished. We will finish them all this year. There was a

slight delay in the polyclinic construction plan, but not a 10-year, 5-year, 3-year, or 2-year delay; they were behind schedule by only a few months, and this is only part of them. The polyclinics are being built correctly with the required quality. Several of these polyclinics will be inaugurated in a few weeks. Also, the polyclinic projects in the capital will be finished this year. All of the demands in this area will have been met. All of the polyclinics in the capital will have the appropriate facilities.

This year we will also finish the special school projects. The 24 special schools the capital needed to completely satisfy the demand will be finished this year. There have also been delays in this program, but not a delay of years, only months.

We have three very important programs that have made considerable progress these past years; these are the child care centers, the polyclinics, and the special schools. The demand will be met this year.

Of course, the demand, the need for child care centers is more flexible. That is why we will always have to....[changes thought] We will not need to build more polyclinics, unless a completely new residential zone is built. Then, we would build a polyclinic for it. However, the current need for polyclinics in the capital will be completely satisfied with the ones we are finishing this year. We are building approximately 60 polyclinics, 20 new ones.

The total need for special schools in the capital will also be met this year. We may find out in 1990 or 1991 that we need another one, or two more. That could happen, but it wouldn't be a problem. These are three important programs which have made extraordinary progress, and which will free a work force and resources for other programs.

We have a bakery construction program. There will be approximately 100 of them. We will soon inaugurate 14 or 15 of these bakeries. We must continue the bakeries program. It is not a highly ambitious plan for this year. The proposal is to build 20 bakeries for 1989. The city must build small markets, produce shops, supermarkets. The distribution (?network) must carry out a series of programs.

The city must carry out programs for primary and secondary schools. It is not that there is a shortage of schools. There isn't a child without a school in the city. However, there are a lot of facilities that have been modified and made into schools. Our dream is that, some day, all primary shools will be like this center. We do not want modified facilities, but instead a new facility with all the conditions, all the requirements for the shool to function optimally. We want all primary schools to have half-boarding. This will also be an important program. Today, there are a few primary schools. Sometimes people live in faraway places and the children have to travel long distances to go the half-board school. All the standard schools we build in the future, which will replace old schools, will be schools that will have half-board for the primary level. However, I think the problem is more serious at the secondary schools than in the primary. There is a relatively high number of primary schools with half-board. The real problem is in the secondary schools. That is why all the secondary schools we build will have half-board for those children who need it, not just for everyone. This is what happens: A mother puts her child in a center. Then he goes to primary school, where he needs the half-board. Fine, there are now a many half-board schools, although they are not always in adequate facilities with all the right conditions. When the child finishes primary school, he is still a child. He may be 11 or 12 years old. He still needs the half-board school, but there are too few secondary schools with half-board. That is what I was referring to. That is why we have been making studies to calculate how many new primary schools to replace old facilities, we will need. That is to say, to calculate the number of schools we will need aside from the ones to be built in the new residential zones. Taking into consideration everything we now have, we have made studies to find out how many primary and secondary schools the revolution should build. We want all of them to have cafeterias for the number of children who need them. We want to someday satisfy this need. Just as we are doing with the child care centers, we want to meet needs in an optimum manner. We intend to carry out this program. We were even going to begin it with a lot of momentum in 1989. However, in 1989, we will take a break. We will take a break not because we don't want to work as hard, but rather because we feel a break is necessary to work more productively and safely.

It became evident in 1988 that the construction movement got ahead of the construction materials industry. Nevertheless, the efforts made [word indistinct] with all kinds of resources to buy bricks, cement blocks, tiles, materials for roofs—everything, all things needed to work with wood and aluminum. A program was set up to begin maintenance on the cement factory. In previous years, the country had the capacity to produce over 5 million tons of cement. For years, however, there was a lot of carelessness in the maintenance of these factories. What they produced was enough because we were not building everything we needed. When this construction program was put into effect, radical innovations were introduced in the way we build, the minibrigades were born again, the contingents came about, the Micons [Ministry of Construction] changed its work style, a series of mechanisms were set aside because they were hell to work with and they did a lot of damage to construction.

A construction boom occurred. The production of materials has lagged behind this construction boom. The year 1988 was a difficult one. There was constant tension. People said: We need this material; we need that material and the other, and so on. By the end of the year, we needed cement. There were problems in the middle of

the year with the heavy flooding in the central part of the country. It affected an undetermined amount of production at the Karl Marx cement factory. There were electrical accidents and problems that almost put the two factories here in the western part of the country out of service.

Something failed in an area that we thought was the most secure: cement. We also have some ambitious plans for cement but they require more time. We are working on the construction of a new cement factory in the eastern part of the country. We need a new line in the Merceron factory in Santiago de Cuba. We need a new line and we are trying to obtain new lines, new furnaces from the GDR. We have to perform important maintenance work in the Merceron factory in Santiago and we have to invest millions of dollars in the recovery and increase of the Mariel factory's cement production. It was designed and conceived to produce 1.4 million tons of cement and it has never produced more than a million tons due to problems, maintenance problems and other difficulties. We are required to make an important investment in this factory in Mariel so that we don't have to transport large quantities of cement from other regions in the country.

New rock and sand quarries are being prepared in the western part of the country. We have used so much rock in this part of the country that the quarries keep getting farther away all the time. We have to look for rock in Pinar del Rio or in Matanzas because the quarries are being exhausted. The distance keeps getting farther. We have to use the railroad system. A contingent is finishing the Purio factory in Villa Clara in record time. It will produce more than 1 million tons of rock and sand. Of course part of this will be used in the region, but this project is being finished as soon as possible to be able to give specially help to the capital. In the western part of the country, several sand and rock mills are being built to deal with this situation in the construction area. We are creating more facilities that can produce anywhere from 12 million cement blocks to just over 50,000 cement blocks. The same is being done with the tile factory. There is a factory and for years the tiles have been sitting there in boxes.

The same thing is happening with the Purio factory. It is being built as fast as possible. The amount of electrical cables has been increased for its construction. We are trying to increase the quantities of cast iron, pipes of all kinds for construction. We are also trying to increase the amount of plastic material for construction. All these efforts are similar in scope.

A great effort is being made to increase the production of steel reinforcement rods. The expansion of the Antillana de Acero steelworks plant has received all the attention and the necessary workforce. The old Antillana de Acero workshop is being expanded this year. It has just been expanded. It will manufacture 100,000 more tons of steel.

In Las Tunas, a contingent created [corrects himself] a contingent built a rolling mill in record time; it will produce an additional 100,000 tons of steel. A second rolling mill is under construction and it will be finished this year. It will produce another 100,000 tons of steel.

On the one hand, production of small levers [palanquillas] increases—important investments are being made—and on the other hand, we are increasing the ability to laminate those small levers to produce steel for use in construction.

New factories to manufacture bathroom fixtures are under construction. The Guanabacoa ironworks factory is being given great impetus. It has become a model of efficient industry and is getting more efficient. Its products are of the highest quality.

We are increasing dozens of items to produce more construction material. Often, wood is scarce. You know that we are promoting lumber cooperation in Siberia with the USSR. We will have thousands [unit of measure not given] but that takes time. We have to save a lot in lumber and, above all, we have to introduce steel in the formworks [encofrados] because steel can be used hundreds of thousands of times while lumber can only be used once or twice. It is not too easy to increase lumber production. To increase the availability of lumber, what we have to do is substitute wooden formworks with steel ones. Prefabricated items also save lumber. We have to increase the availability of lumber. Above all, in the case of lumber, we have to be thrifty because it is not easy for the country to obtain substantial increases of woods without a great effort, as we are doing with the plan in the USSR.

The year 1988 was a tense one because of all these reasons. Child care centers were not built earlier for (?several) reasons. There was no workforce to build them. If the party decided that there should be a child care center in the capital because there was a pressing need for it, if the government decided that a child care center had to be built in the capital, it was not possible to build it. That was how impossible construction had become in the capital. We couldn't even build a child care center.

There was no workforce. Since the minibrigades had disappeared, the capital was filling up with people from the east and from other provinces. I wouldn't dare say anything bad about the people from the east knowing how many people and descendants from the east there are here in the capital.

There was no workforce for construction projects. Now we have thousands and thousands of people. It is thousands and thousands of people because the explosion was so large. Despite the 35,000 members of the minibrigades, we still need that workforce for several important projects.

The thing that has made possible the miracle of the child care centers, what has made these programs possible, what has made possible the more than 100 child care centers in 2 years, is the rebirth of the minibrigades. Now we have a bigger workforce. [applause]

With 35,000 workers, we can now say that we have more workers than material. They have more experience, more training. It is because of this that I add [words indistinct].

What we have now is not the same situation we had in 1987. When the minibrigade movement began, the minibrigades were not yet very productive. In 1988, they became more productive. The social minibrigades then emerged. They will be more productive in 1989 and we want to increase the production of material to match the constructive ability we have created. We'll see what we can do. We went from a situation where we had five, five [repeats himself] child care centers planned in a 5-year period and they were not built. In the 5-year period from 1986-1990, five child care centers were included in the program and they were not built because the workforce did not exist. The lack of materials was not observed then because there was enough material for what was being built. The problem was discovered when the construction boom occurred. Now we have a workforce to build 100 child care centers in 2 years.

A tremendous construction force has been created and we have to consolidate it in 1989. We have established very clear priorities this year, very clear. Economic projects have priority. Economic projects that generate convertible currency are our number one priority. This applies to the entire country and with very few exceptions. Economic projects have priority and those economic projects that help the country solve its convertible currency problems have the greatest priority.

The social program continues. Social projects are of secondary priority. Among those social projects, housing is the most important. We want to give more momentum to housing in the year 1989. [applause] (?It is) time. Our goal was to build 20,000 rooms, to build 20,000 homes in 1990. It is possible that we may not reach this goal by 1990. It may take us another year to do so.

Instead of reaching that goal by 1990, we will reach it by 1991. However, there will be much more certainty in the construction area. There will be a lot of materials, there is no doubt about that. There will be sand, rock, reinforcement rods, many of those materials, cement blocks—we will even have enough to make cement block candy. [as heard] Many new production lines are being installed.

For now, we are concernd about cement. Our current tasks can be finished before 1990 with the cement we have. Without a doubt, we will not [words indistinct], but that will take a little more time. First of all, we must save cement. Many people use more cement than they actually need. By saving 10 percent in cement, we could have over 350,000 tons available, almost enough for a new factory. As long as we continue to increase our cement production capacity, we must be able to save. That could be what will determine whether or not we reach the goal by 1990. If we did not, the reason would not be a lack of construction capacity. That is why the minibrigade movement is going at a rate that, if all materials were available, they can build 20,000 homes by 1990. It could also build a large number of primary and secondary schools, bakeries, and all other necessary social facilities. That is what I am talking about when I say that in 1989 we must take a break. In the capital and the rest of the country, we built a lot more in 1988 (?than) in 1987. In 1989, we will build much more than in 1988. There will be more construction.

However, as I was saying about social projects, in addition to economic ones, priority wil be given to housing. We will see how much we can build in 1990. There will be no limits in the construction force. The limits will be set by the availability of construction materials; some materials only, because we will have solved the shortage of many other materials. That is why we think our goal of building 20,000 homes each year by 1990 will fall behind by a year. The goal for 1990 may be between 15,000 and 16,000. This figure is already four times more than what was built in 1986. Maybe by 1991, we will reach the 20,000 goal. We will have a small delay. We shouldn't lose sleep over that. However, we will have much more certainty and productivity in construction. That is why school programs in 1989 will not have much impetus yet, and the bakeries, and other institutions will [words indistinct].

We have a project that is not of an economic nature. We could say it is more of a social nature. However, it constitutes an important commitment made by our country: the projects for the Pan-American Games.

This is the only thing that is not included in the established list of priorities. It is not an economic project, it is a social one. We waged a big battle with other countries for many years just to host the Pan-American Games. This went on for many years. It gave rise to international battles and hard times, until our country was made the host. The nation has a commitment and must fulfill its commitment. I'm going to tell you something else: We who worry about certain criteria and priorities, those of us who know the importance of economic and social projects, say that the Pan-American Games are only going to use up a small part, a small part [repeats himself] of the resources and manpower in the country.

One of the projects for the Pan-American Games, one of the most important, are the 2,000 houses we're building —the famous Pan-American Villa. The famous Pan-American Villa is included in the 1990-1991 housing plans. This is housing that's going to be used for a few days only during the Pan-American Games. Afterward, the workers will get them. In other words, one of the

most expensive things....[interrupted by applause] One of the most expensive things for the Pan-American Games, the Olympic villa, will be turned into a magnificent residential area for the workers. As soon as the Pan-American Games are over, the housing will be distributed. This is why the minibrigades are going to build the villa. They form part of the capital's housing plan. [applause]

So this does not clash in the least with our priorities. I'm not worried about the other works. For the first time, the nation will have a complex of Olympic-size swimming pools. A complex that we have not had in the 30 years of revolution. As for the plans for the development of the capital, in the meetings with the people who work in the city's comprehensaive development plan, we have told them to clear the way for athletic installations, as a future project. Among the capital's development plans there is the proposal to build some 40 swimming facilities. We have to see what impact the multitudes will have on the beaches east of Havana. There isn't much transportation, there isn't much anything, but if we want to develop sports, we must build sports facilities. In previous years, the nation has not been able to build many swimming facilities. There is a reason to build them because of the importance they mean for the population's well-being and health.

The city's development plan has 40 facilities of this type. This means that 200,000 people a day could go swimming without going to Guanabo or Santa Maria. This idea came about after our experience with the swimming pool complex at Lenin Park. These pools have been in service for 2 to 3 years now. There are some Sundays when, despite the distance, up to 5,000 people go to the pool. Up to 5,000 people go! Of course, you know that, in a certain way, we are like cats, and in these months, our so-called winter, nobody dares to go in the water. However, in the summer, everybody, even the cat, goes into the water. It's a matter of culture, of getting used to it; that water won't hurt anyone. Cold water is cold water and many people swim in it. In Europe, in northern Europe, the water is 15, 16, and 17 degrees in the summer. For them this is wonderful, it's marvelous. Here, the temperature rarely gets any lower than 25 degrees, and when it reaches 24 degrees no one sticks his hand in the water.

After our experience with the swimming complex at Lenin Park, we saw what we could do. We used it mainly in the summer. Then we got some buses and connected a series of schools with this swimming complex, and this way thousands of children learned to swim. In fact, some of the children became athletes. Ever since that experience—which was not a new idea, it was an old one; this idea has been going around for a long time—the idea of the pool complexes....[changes thought] You don't know how much money they save the country when people have a swimming complex five or six blocks away from their house. They don't have to take a bus to Lenin Park or those other places. We think that every 40,000-50,000 people need a swimming complex, Olympic-sized pools of the kind you can do high dives into. We have already started building the first ones. We are building them in San Miguel del Padron. The first pool is not an Olympic one. What? No, the one in Alamar is a different one. I mean the ones in these projects. [Castro is seen addressing unidentified person next to him] There is a family pool and a pool for children who are only a few months old. That way they can be put there to swim, because children should learn to swim while they are of nursery age. Children should learn to swim when they are in the first level at the child care center. They should not ignore the laws of nature and human evolution. Life came from water. Life came from water! It was done instinctively! [applause] Children learn to swim instinctively. You have to throw them into the water when they're very young. Perhaps one day we'll have a bathtub in every child care center so that the kids can learn to swim. Don't think this is a barbarous act. This has been scientifically tested. One doesn't know how much it helps development. Children should begin to swim at that age.

So, the future plans for the city—the city with which we dream of when we speak of its comprehensive development, when we speak of sports, and not only sports but recreation, of sports and recreation—include 40 swimming pool complexes. [Words indistinct] people might think a lot of water will be used. But no, you don't change the water. They have filters that clean the water constantly. Swimming pools do not waste water if a certain amount of chlorine is used. Also among the future dreams there are plans to recycle water [30-second break in reception] use in agriculture. We are planning to recycle water in the future. So, there are plans regarding [words indistinct] an Olympic-size swimming pool.

We are going to have the one at San Miguel del Padron and this one for the Olympiads. It stays there forever. It is not an installation that is going to be used for the Olympiads alone. It stays forever. It is going to be excellent. It is going to be the best one we have in terms of sports. It is going to be used more for sports than for recreation but it is going to be a great installation that will remain for the use of our people and our young.

The country has not been able to build a velodrome in 30 years. This is a country that likes cycling. We have had very brilliant, great champions. This country has not been able to build a velodrome in 30 years. Well, the country is going to have its first velodrome. It is a pretty sophisticated type of construction in terms of quality. Mistakes cannot be made, not even a millimiter can be off. In this sense, it takes a lot of work. It is a very valuable installation.

The country is going to have an Olympic stadium. The country doesn't have any. The stadiums we have had already been built. We extended this one with the work of the CDR [Committees for the Defense of the Revolution] a number of years ago. We made improvements to

the Pedro Marrero Stadium. The revolution is going to build the first Olympic stadium in 30 years. It is going to be here forever. Some other kinds of installations, smaller ones, such as tennis courts and the multipurpose room will be built close by. A big multipurpose room will be built not far away from here. So far, we have counted on the place called Palace of Sports, an installation that has existed since before the revolution.

Many sports installations have been built in the country, all kinds of installations. Some kind of sports installations were always included in the thousands of schools that were built. Track, soccer, baseball, volleyball, basketball fields were built. More baseball fields have been built. There is no province without a large baseball stadium. And not only provinces; even cities of a certain size ask for and sometimes build their own baseball stadium because baseball is a very popular sport. I just remembered that I have to finish here before the baseball game starts. [chuckles; crowd laughs] It is a very popular sport. It has become the one sports. Other very good sports such as soccer have not taken as much hold.

Swimming has not been as popular. We have played ridiculous roles in international competition despite the fact that we are an island. Of course, one does not learn to swim competitively in the ocean. Competition takes place in fresh water, but it is a shame that a citizen from this country does not know how to swim. I don't even want to think about it. There must be a few of those here who don't know how to swim. [laughter] This is an island. Most of the facilities are baseball installations. We have to build other kinds of sports installations. It is impossible to build a baseball field in each secondary and primary school. It is impossible. It would be crazy. We need to learn to play volleyball—we are pretty good at it. We need to learn to play basketball—we haven't been as good—and other sports because there is not enough space to build installations and use them well in any given city.

I believe the time will come when we will have these installations in all the cities of the country and not only in the capital. They are going to help enormously for the well-being and the standard of living the population, for the health of the population.

The country will finally have these facilities after 30 years. Actually, this is the only thing that is not within the priorities we have established. However, they will be extremely useful to the country and for the residents of the capital. There are practically no sports facilities in the eastern part of the country. They are all here around this area, here and (?there). Well, there will be an Olympic stadium, a [word indistinct] and a pool, and [words indistinct]. Finally, there will be a rowing canal; it won't cost us much. The rowing canal will be at the (Corone) dam which is to the west of Havana. This (?is forcing) us to find a solution, and we will have the appropriate facilities for these sports. The construction projects for the Pan-American Games are the only ones that are not on the priority list we have established. The Pan-American projects will be built by the minibrigades and by the Sixth Congress contingent. Part of the Sixth Congress has left for Varadero to work on economic projects, and the other part remains here in the capital. The Blas Roca contingent is working on the groundbreaking—as you know, the contingent has a very high productivity level. The construction plan for the Pan-American Games will not be delayed a single day because of the groundbreaking.

These are the basic ideas for the 1989 construction plans. Within a few days, we will inaugurate other projects. We will inaugurate the polyclinics which were recently completed and have not been inaugurated. Several special schools that have been completed will be inaugurated. Approximately 24 production lines for construction materials that have been completed, or are being completed, will be inaugurated. Did I mention the bakeries? I mentioned polyclinics, special schools, bakeries....[unidentified speaker interrupts with indistinct remark] There are many other plans the minibrigades are working on, but I am talking about important plans. I (?am including) the construction materials production line, which totals four plans. [speaker makes indistinct remark] What? Ah! There is something else. There are so many things, that anyone could forget them.

There are 400 family doctor clinics. Do you know....[changes thought] The plan for the family doctor clinics continues, of course; otherwise, it would fail. The clinic [words indistinct] the doctor's house, the nurse's house. The clinic is much larger. That plan continues, it will not be touched. Since those facilities are a bit larger, we may build 400 instead of 600 in 1989, as we have done at other times.

There will be about 400 family doctor clinics. What are we going to do with the other doctors? We have over 500 doctors. In 1989, we are going to expand the family doctor plan. We are going to add 400 more family doctors to the plan, along with the other doctors. The ones whose clinics can't be built yet, we are going to send to factories, schools, and child care centers. [applause] The family doctor plan includes not only us, the community, it also includes schools, child care centers, and factories. What is happening? We have given priority to the community. Don't think that the family doctors have little to do with achievements. They are achieving new successes in health care. The family doctor has played an important role in brining down infant mortality to 11.9 percent. However, I hope that in the future they play a greater role.

Over 100 doctors will join these institutions: schools, child care centers, and factories. I calculate that at least, at least [repeats himself]—we still haven't made the distributions—40 to 50 doctors will be going to the child care centers. We are going to make sure that they complete their course in general integral medicine at the corresponding polyclinic. I forgot to say that in the

future there will be one more man—or woman, because it's probably going to be a woman—on the child care center's staff. This person will be the family doctor. This year we're going to start with no less than 50 doctors in the child care centers. This will give the centers a higher level of quality. This will afford the mother greater ease of mind. Do you know the problems mothers have with their children? They worry if they are sick, they wonder if they have to pick them up and take them home. Having a doctor at the center is a gigantic step forward. So then, we are going to assign some of the doctors to child care centers.

We have made so much progress with community doctors that over 60 percent of the capital's population already has a family doctor; the figure is 63 percent. Next year we will exceed 70 percent; excuse me, I mean this year over 70 percent of the capital's population will have this benefit. This figure should go up by 550 family doctors; we will go up by 400 [as heard] doctors. This is another measure we have decided to take to alleviate the family doctor situation somewhat. However, you have to keep in mind that the family doctor clinics can also be included in the housing project, because the doctor's housing is, itself, housing, and the nurses housing is one more house.

This is to say that, among the things that will be inaugurated these next few days, I am not sure if we will include the 400 (?clinics). I think we have to inaugurate a hospital plus the 400, or the polyclinics and the 400. All in one day? The polyclinics? There's 500 of them? All finished. [addresses person close to him] Well then, we will inaugurate the polyclinics that are finished and the family doctor clinics. These are things that have to be inaugurated in different programs. We had thought about doing it all in a single day, but it would be madness [chuckles] to inaugurate all of that in a day. But, they're all important, every single one of those projects is important. In the next few weeks, we will inaugurate the Lebredo Maternity Hospital annex of the Julio Trigo Hospital. It's a tremendous hospital, and it will be inaugurated within the next few weeks. In the next few weeks we will inaugurate the expansion of the Albarran hospital, which has been more than doubled in size; it is also a tremendous construction. Within the next few weeks we will inaugurate the pediatric hospital in Marianao, also a tremendous hospital. That makes three hospitals and the conclusion [chuckles] of the hospital expansion plan we came up with barely 3 years ago for the hospital network in the capital.

It has been a substantial job, and none of these projects, which are so important for the population, will be sacrificed. None of the social works, nor the ones for the Pan-American Games will affect the important economic projects for the capital. All of the capital's economic projects will have absolute priority. It is with this criteria that we have drawn up the 1989 plans. I haven't mentioned the roads that are being built in the capital. The Blas Roca Contingent built the road that goes from 100th Street to EXPOCUBA in a few weeks or months. The Blas Roca Contingent has already done all of the leveling for the East-West Highway between the entrance to Pinar del Rio and 100th Street. The contingent workers have been expanding Boyeros. There is an ambitious road construction program in the capital which will not be sacrificed in the least. On the contrary! It's going to grow.

We are also working on a road to connect the capital with Pinar del Rio. We are already working on a two-track railroad which we are going to extend in the direction of Artemisa. When the contingent working on the Pinar del Rio highway finishes its job, it will go to Artemisa to build the two-track railroad! It will run between Pinar del Rio and Havana. The western end of the country will be connected to the capital not only with a four-lane highway, but also with a two-track railroad.

As I told you, transportation of materials and other products is increasing between Pinar del Rio and Havana, and between Havana and Pinar del Rio; this is a series of important programs. I think the minibrigades fulfilled a big promise when they finished building EXPOCUBA. EXPOCUBA is proof of what can be accomplished in quality, cost, rationalization, and construction efficiency. This is truly great proof. I think the minibrigades have reached adulthood by building EXOPCUBA. You should see how the population worked in those last few weeks, and what they accomplished. What they did is truly unbelievable. This teaches us all that we can do what we set our minds to. We can do everything we want to do. It is simply a matter of time. Every time we do something like this we must make sure we do it in a more organized and efficient way.

As I was telling you earlier, within all of these social projects, housing will be considered a priority that no obstacle will hinder. I hope that the housing projects get a big push throughout this year. The country is also making progress in hotel construction. This falls within the economic sphere. These are hotels for international tourism. This is economic priority number one. We are drawing up some very ambitious plans. In Varadero there are already some 4,000 construction workers, and this number will continue to grow. We will not only work in Varadero, we will work in Santiago de Cuba Province, Holguin Province, Camaguey Province, on the Isle of Youth, and in the capital. However, the main part of these construction projects will not be in the capital. Some hotels will be built in the capital and some of the old hotels will be remodeled and rebuilt. With respect to this, we have a reconstruction program and a new hotel program. These programs are very modest, but the first 21-story hotel is under construction. We are building this one in conjunction with a foreign enterprise. It is already under construction by the Blas Roca Contingent.

The main group of hotels, hundreds....[corrects himself] I mean dozens of hotels—and perhaps even hundreds of hotels—will be built in other areas. They will be built in

beaches such as Varadero, or in virgin zones like the ones that have been built up north of Ciego de Avila. They will be built in places like Cayo Coco, which is 400 square km—or almost 400; it's actually a little less. There is a causeway that takes you there. We will have a big plan for that, and we will need to mobilize tens of thousands of men.

Our experience with the minibrigades in the capital shows we have the men we need. If we add up the minibrigade contingents, the minibrigades that build houses and the social minibrigades, we already have a minimum of 35,000 minibrigade members. For example, in old (Guinera)—I think that is the name of the place—there is a large social minibrigade that has hundreds of people, and they are building a lot of buildings. Many of them were former housewives, workers who live in the area. They are working on the program to eradicate unsanitary neighborhoods. The majority are women. The minibrigade is managed by women, and, in my opinion, they are doing a very impressive job.

Including the social minibrigades, we have no less than 35,000 minibrigade members in the capital. What is the most we could have? We could have up to 50,000, or 60,000, or 70,000; I tell you, we could even have up to 100,000, if we needed them. Of course, we would not have enough materials in this country, [word in distinct] to put 100,000 minibrigade members to work. So, don't worry. We will not go up to 100,000 minibrigade workers.

What I am saying is that what has happened in the capital shows what can be done. It used to be that we could not build anything because we did not have the workforce. We had to bring it in from the eastern part of the country, from Camaguey, Ciego de Avila, and Pinar del Rio.

I asked the director of this center where she was from. I have the habit of asking people that, because we have so many people (?from) the eastern part of the country. But I can always guess where they are from, by their appearance, and even by their look. [laughter] So, I said to myself: I wonder if this director is from the eastern part of the country? I asked her: Where are you from? She answered: I'm from Pinar del Rio. [laughter] Even people like you, from Pinar del Rio, come here? I can just imagine it, now, with the new highway. [laughter] Fortunatelly, we have the [word indistinct] railroad. Just imagine!

Anyway, we are working on the large development program for all those provinces. Pinar del Rio already has a lower infant moratality rate than Havana. Havana's infant mortality rate is 11.9 and Pinar del Rio's is 10. Cienfuegos' rate is lower than Havana's; it is 8.9. [unidentified speaker interrupts with indistinct comment] Who? Sorry. Let's see. The national rate is 11.9, Havana's is 10.6—that's right. Sorry, Havana residents. [laughter] Just a while ago we were talking about your achievements with the family doctors. Havana's rate is 10.6, Pinar del Rio's is 10, Cienfuegos' is 8.9. The living conditions we are creating in the interior of the country are better than the capital's. Among other things, the people in the interior have more water. The cities are smaller and have larger rivers. So, we shouldn't have too many people. We don't want the capital to become filled with Pinar del Rio and Villa Clara residents, as well as people from the eastern provinces. [laughter] But, if we don't give them a little push....[leaves thought unfinished] If we bring them, recruit them, and make them build things here, and they settle and fall in love with Havana women, who is going to make them go back? [laughter] These are the problems. As I was saying, we were not able to build anything.

There was no labor force. So what do I think? I think and believe the following: There are 800,000 workers in the capital. The capital has 800,000 workers. If you take one worker out of every eight, not a thing will happen. We know this. For the child care centers we took out one from every six. They had a staff of 57 and we took it down to 48. This is a good record, and as I said, that wasn't pushing it. However much [words indistinct] from a staff of 1,800, and with half of that, they are producing 5 or 6 times more than they used to.

The CENIC [National Center for Scientific Research] had a staff of 1,400 people, the Applied Physics Department had a staff of 1,200 people; now they have a little over 600 and are doing much more research than before. I'm not saying that we should take away half of every eight. [chuckles] I'm saying we should take out one person out of every eight. [chuckles] If in the capital we take out 1 person in 8 there will be 100,000 people if in this country—in which everyone is learning to build and where the new generations were educated in work-study schools and no one minds laying a brick. Look at some of those other societies where people haven't touched a tree, pulled a weed, or laid a brick. Yet this country is used to all that—we take out 1 of every 8 workers, as a rule, and nothing will happen. The Miguel Henriquez Hospital, which has just been expanded, had 450 workers—no, not workers; I meant beds—now has 1,250 beds, after the expansion. Before, they used to have 2.4 or 2.5 or 2. I don't know how many workers per bed. Now they have 1.7; I think it's 1.7, if not a little less. What? [Unidentified speaker makes indistinct comment]

There are 1.68 workers, so it's less than 1.7, and it's working better than ever. It's clear that all the time they were saying we didn't have the workforce, we had all the workforce we wanted. We have only mobilized about ⅓ of those 100,000 workers, and it turns out that we don't have enough materials. With all of the materials we produce, it's not enough. Imagine what that force—which wants more expertise and micromechanization of many functions and activities—could produce with a little more equipment. How many millions is this year's plan? [Castro addresses someone near him whose

responses are indistinct] No, that was in 1988. The minibrigades, how much did they build in 1988? Does that include the social minibrigades? Oh, they're not included.

Experience tells us we could have done whatever we wanted? Maybe it's a social minibrigade and....[changes thought] Oh, I didn't count the housewives. They give us an added force because many of the women in (Guineras) are housewives. They live there close to work, and many of them improved their economic situation. I have spoken to many of these women. Many of them had 2 children and received a small pension of 60 pesos for the 2 children. Suddenly, they have raised their income to 200 pesos by working in the social minibrigades. So you see, there is an enormous human potential! How many hours do those women work? Who knows? Perhaps they work 10, 11, or 12 hours a day. If you go there at night you'll see them working, whether it's 2200 or 2300. Many minibrigade members in the work center, who have a narrow profile [narrow field of study] and all that nonsense, said they worked 44 hours. That's nonsense.

They said they worked 35, 33, or 30 hours. Now in the minibrigades they don't work less than 60 hours. Every one of those men that has been in the minibrigades—I'm not talking about the contingents now—every one of those men who has been in the minibrigades is working twice as hard. This is despite the problems with the materials shortage. I'm not talking about the contingents. The workers in the contingents are working triple. The workers in the Blas Roca are working triple, and anything they are told to do they do with great discipline, organization, and efficiency. If it rains and they can't work, they will work for several days until 0000 or 0100 and you have to hold them back. You should see the qualities of those workers. I say that there are no collective workers in the world like our present contingents. There are none that are as productive as our contingents, that are as efficient as our contingents, that work the hours our contingents work! [applause] This is how you really make progress. This is how the country can truly make progress. How quickly time passes. The ball is coming close. [laughter]

I don't want to carry on about this much longer; I want to make it shorter to congratulate the minibrigade workers who are here, as well as the PCC cadres. [applause] I also want to thank the municipal cadres of the People's Government. [applause] I want to thank the cadres and workers of the child care centers. [applause] This must be a day of great satisfaction for them because of the great effort and attention these activities have received and because of the formidable things these child care center have become.

I am in awe of the warmth with which these comrades work, the love they do it with. [applause] I ask many of them if they like their work and they say: Yes, I like it very much. That is the answer most of them give me. [applause] This is a job that has been truly stimulating: the attention given to the children. No other mission has been more important or more sacred than the one in their hands. They hold the trust of the revolution, of the children's parents, and of the people among whom these children were born. I also want to thank the brother Latin Americans who worked on this center. [applause]

There are many symbolic things about this afternoon, such as this child care center named "Che's Dreams" which was built by Latin Americans. [applause; crowd cheers]

A painter—I think he's from El Salvador—painted a mural. I asked the director who painted the mural. She was explaining what it meant—there was a line of boys on one side and a line of girls on the other—and the mural was very pretty. She said that the painter told her that the children weren't smiling, they were sad because they didn't have what Cuban children have. The children couldn't smile like the Cuban children could. Unfortunately, this is reality. We are very privileged to have institutions such as this in our country. They are built for our worker's children. I hope someday we can have centers for all the children. In accordance with our conviction, the child care centers are essential institutions for children's education. No matter how well they are treated at home, no matter how much they learn at home, no matter how close the family nucleus is, there are some things that exist only at the centers; they don't exist in the homes. These are things such as the atmosphere, resources, special personnel, and others that are important to the development of their intelligence, and they don't exist in the homes.

Today we have centers for the children of working mothers. Whenever we can, we should have centers for all children so that, in that phase of life, they don't lose the extraordinary opportunity that is their education. Now a social need is satisfied. In the future the centers will have to meet the educational need of all children.

I hope the day comes in which we can have children as boarders as early as primary and secondary school. That way they don't have to go out into the streets, taking risks. Moreover, our future plans are to put the schools closer to the children. This, of course, demands economic development. It demands an increase in food production, and I assure you that the nation is making a considerable effort in that area. The country is making an effort as never before. The results of these endeavours will be seen in the future. They will come, fundamentally, from the nation's raw materials and sugarcane. We have a plan to make the most efficient use of solar energy; a plant that readily converts solar energy into calories. All of these plans require economic development. Food is needed. All of these centers require a considerable quota of milk, poultry, and different types of nourishing things. We like these institutions. Everybody thinks about these institutions. However, not everyone thinks of the productive efforts these institutions require, especially an increase in food production.

Well, now, I was saying that this afternoon represents many symbolic things. I was telling you about this center that was built by Latin Americans, which is being inaugurated along with 53 other centers, all on the same day, and that this day happens to be Jose Marti's birthday. [applause] I believe that this is truly a beautiful way to honor Marti, a man who had such dreams for the children; he thought about them very much. Another child care center could be named "Marti's Dreams." [applause] Perhaps one of those we build, one of the five we build in 1989, can bear his name.

I have wanted to leave the end of the speech to express our emotion, recognition, and pride in having here in the first row a noted group of internationalist combatants. [applause] They have victoriously returned to the fatherland. The year 1988 was a very tense one. It was a year of much work and many efforts. It was a hard year, but a year of important achievements. It was also the year in which we achieved an honorable peace in Angola. In this peace, we guaranteed the right to independence for the ravaged people of Namibia. It was the year of victory and peace. [applause]

In less than 2 and ½ years some 50,000 men will return to the fatherland. Some people think that the return of the combatants might mean a social problem. They want to know how they will be employed. We can assure you that the 50,000 men will have employment! They will have it in the armed forces, those who are regulars, in the jobs they held before they left to fulfill their internationalist duties, or in new jobs. Top, top, top [repeats himself] priority will be given to the internationalist combatants' employment. [applause] This is a new, tremendous force. We feel happy, not only because they will be back here in the bosom of their families and fatherland running the risks we all run, but also because they represent a youthful and capable force. They can do much for the development of the nation.

I always ask the comrades: Were the ones from Angola already recruited? What are you going to do with them? I urge them to recruit internationalist combatants to work in the big ambitious plans we have. I ask the party, the contingents, and everyone: Are you hoping to recruit at least part of the internationalist combatants who are returning? This is done in order to win this other long, almost endless battle of Third World countries at the present time, which is the battle for the country's development. We will win this battle in the same way we have won all the other battles throughout the 30 years of the revolution. [applause]

I believe it is a privilege to count on these forces. If construction feats have been accomplished here, they too have accomplished construction feats over there in addition to their military feats. Nobody knows the trenches they dug, the positions they fortified. When our Air Force had to advance 250 km in a matter of weeks, in a matter of weeks [repeats] they built one of the most efficient and functional military airports in Africa. [applause] When a man wants to do something, he can do it. When a man has confidence in himself and, above all, when a man has confidence in other men and can work together with others in a disciplined way, he is capable of achieving what he sets out to achieve. This is why today we are twice, thrice as satisfied with the return of our internationalist combatants. We are very happy that they are here tonight sharing the successes in other areas of the people of Havana.

All of us should make this 1989 a greater success than 1988. [applause] We will meet again to inaugurate other things, the things we build in 1989. I hope that if this outcome has been good, next year's outcome will be even better. We are all aware that we should work a great deal. We are all aware that we should do it with more efficiency but we all also know that when a project such as this one is built—we have all built it together—we can live moments of great emotion and great happiness.

Fatherland or death, we shall win! [crowd replies: "We shall win!"] [applause]

Havana To Host Economic Meeting With Bulgaria
FL0602220189 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 2032 GMT 6 Feb 89

[Text] The 20th session of the Cuba-Bulgaria Intergovernmental Commission for Economic and Scientific-Technological Cooperation will be held in Havana on 8-9 February.

During the meeting the delegates will study the development of this cooperation during the past 25 years and will analyze the main results and their benefits to the two nations.

At the 20th session of the commission, the delegates will also inaugurate a robotics laboratory and sign a protocol at EXPOCUBA. The aid Cuba receives from Bulgaria, in volume, is second only to the aid received from the Soviet Union. More than 6,800 technicians from the country of Georgi Dimitrov [first leader of the People's Republic of Bulgaria] have given their valuable assistance to several of our nation's economic sectors.

The Bulgarian specialists have also had an important role in the construction of roads and hydraulic works in our country, stressed Raul Donas, vice president of the State Committee for Economic Cooperation. He added that the Bulgarian aid is also included in physical planning projects and agriculture, irrigation, and drainage works.

Also of great importance is the training Cuban technicians and workers receive in Bulgaria. Some 1,900 Cubans have been trained in credit systems, establishing and using electronuclear centers and fire stations, and in building ports and dams.

At present there are 17 agreements for scientific-technical cooperation between Cuban and Bulgarian organs, institutes, and enterprises.

Vilma Espin Attends Socialist Womens' Meeting

FL0802033489 Havana Television Service in Spanish 0100 GMT 8 Feb 89

[Text] The meeting of leaders of womens' organizations of socialist countries is being held at the Palace of Conventions. Present at the meeting is Vilma Espin, member of the PCC Politburo and president of the Federation of Cuban Women.

Some of the themes being discussed by the feminine organizations' leaders are the family's development in socialism, the role played by both parents in the attention and formation of their children, and the importance of educating youths before they establish their own families. They are also discussing factors that influence divorces and the need to share the domestic workload between all working family members. They also continue to work for the stability and happiness of the family.

At the meeting, Espin said she hoped that this meeting was a another step further in their cooperation and that it could help solve some problems that affect women in socialism so that they can better fulfill their role in the international sphere.

Castro Decorates Latin American Writers

FL0702130389 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 7 Feb 89

[Excerpt] President Fidel Castro decorated Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano with the Felix Varela Order last night. Fidel bestowed the Alejo Carpentier Medal on Ecuadoran writer (Enrique Adoum) during the same ceremony. The decoration ceremony was held in Havana.

Roberto Fernandez Retamar, director of the House of the Americas, delivered a speech of praise. Fernandez Retamar said Galeano and (Adoum) are citizens of the revolutionary culture of the continent and are among the most dear collaborators and friends of the House of the Americas.

Speaking during the ceremony, (Adoum) and Galeano stressed the fact that the decorations given to them come from the Cuban Revolution and were bestowed by Fidel. The Ecuadoran writer called Fidel the commander of the Latin American revolution. For his part, Galeano noted that Fidel was the main character in one of the greatest epics in American history of all time.

Juan Almeida, Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, and Armando Hart, members of the PCC Politburo, attended the decoration ceremony. After the decorations were presented, Fidel had a lively chat with other members of the jury for the House of the Americas 1989 literary award. [passage omitted]

Construction Contingent Congratulated on Work

FL0802031289 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 0003 GMT 8 Feb 89

[Text] On behalf of Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, Pedro Ross, member of the PCC Secretariat of the Central Committee, congratulated the members of the Heros of Cuito Cuanavale Contingent. They are a collective that recently finished the first part of important work being done on the salvaging of water works [voluntad hidraulica] in the northern part of Ciego de Avila Province.

That work force, composed of 115 workers, finished the first 7.6 km of a ditch that begins in the (El Salado) region of the island of [words indistinct] and stretches to the canal of Chicula, the only access to the sea from the Lagoon of Milk [Laguna de la Leche].

The completion of this first stretch required the use of some 70,000 cubic meters of dirt, which was moved by a fleet of 7 trucks that, on the average, made 14 trips per day and worked shifts of up to 12 hours.

Coloso Rodriguez Gonzalez, chief of the contingent, said that they had to use up to 30,000 cubic meters of dirt in some parts of the ditch to be able to advance the line 1 meter. He stressed that, in the payment concept [as heard] the work reached a level of up to 20 centavos for every peso produced; this shows the efficiency of the work being done.

Ross praised the fact that some members of the contingent are internationalists who took part in the battle of Cuito Cuanavale, as well as other important actions to free the brother Republic of Angola. In general, this work shows their prowess because it is in a muddy area that is full of mangroves and other such plants.

Alfredo Hondal Gonzalez, PCC Central Committee member and first secretary of the PCC in Ciego de Avila, Luis Brito Jimenez, general secretary of the National Construction Workers Union, and other comrades were present at the ceremony noting the effort being made by that contingent.

U.S. Citizen Arrested for Smuggling Drugs

FL0702125589 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 7 Feb 89

[Text] On Saturday, 4 February, members of the Border Guard Troops arrested U.S. citizen (William Rodriguez Cooper). The 42-year-old man, crewmember of

"Marman," a yacht registered in the United States, was arrested when the vessel ran aground on Pluma beach in Maizi Municipality, Guantanamo Province.

The Ministry of the Interior reported that the 30-foot white yacht had 250 kilograms of marijuana on board. According to Cooper, he was going from Jamaica—where he obtained the drug for $40,000—to Florida, in the United States, when he ran aground on Cuban coasts.

Citizen (William Rodriguez Cooper) has been arrested and will be turned over to the corresponding authorities. As is usually done in these cases, the drug was burned.

Men Detained for Illegal Sale of Alcohol

FL0402131889 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 4 Feb 89

[Text] PNR [National Revolutionary Police] officials in Bauta Municipality, Havana Province, have dismantled a clandestine still. The still was in Ignacio Mantilla Fernandez' home, which is in Finca Lucillo between 123rd Street and (Linea) in Marianao, Havana.

Mantilla had rented the apartment from Wilfredo Antonio Perez Higa of 51st Avenue No 15608, between 156th Street and 158th Street of Havana's La Lisa Municipality, to carry out his illicit economic activities.

The illegal activities were discovered when agents of the municipality's Internal Order Division [orden interior] saw a suspicious looking van parked close to a warehouse belonging to the MINAZ [Sugar Ministry] in the neighborhood of La Faustina. Searching the vehicle, the agents found 26 sacks of activated coal used to distill alcohol. Once the alcohol was distilled, they sold each can for 75 pesos.

The agents immediately detained the driver, Ramon Antonio Perez Abreu, and his accomplice, Wilfredo Antonio Perez Higa, mastermind of this delinquent act. After being charged, Perez Higa confessed that citizens Jose Leon Macias Valdez and Juan Miguel Pedrozo Souza were also involved in the activities. Both men, who are store administrators, supplied Perez Higa with the alcohol to make the illegal beverage.

For now the accused are in custody [medida cautelar] and will be brought before the corresponding tribunals along with two other men accused of receiving the illegal material.

* Material Incentives System Changes Reviewed

32480065a Havana GRANMA in Spanish 30 Dec 88 p 2

[Text] The analyses being conducted by the agencies of the Central State Administration on the distribution of the award fund for 1987 should be completed by the end of the year. The awards will be given to all collectives that have earned that right through the results of their work.

Similarly, in the first 4 months of 1989, before 30 April, the awards corresponding to 1988 should be distributed.

During this stage, the factors involved in the formation and granting of the awards were deemed adequate. The indicators, which include meeting supply plans, quality, control of material resources, and accounting reliability, were stricter than before.

For both 1987 and this year, the material incentives will be granted only to enterprises in the productive sphere and in the lodging sector (tourism). The workplaces that are classified in the commerce sector and that were included in this procedure before will now be excluded.

Within the framework of the process of rectifying errors and negative tendencies, the fundamental problems in this incentive mechanism have been studied. As a result, erroneous ideas based on the economic management and planning system and deficiencies in the application of this system were brought to light.

As has been reported, the formation and distribution of the material incentives fund were based on the formulation and application of the plan for the economy, profitability, and earnings.

Profitability and earnings in many cases do not really reflect the efficiency of a given collective, and vice-versa: Workplaces that fulfill their plans with quality and efficiency do not manage to make profits or obtain earnings. Consequently, they are deprived of the award.

Sometimes, in certain places, the efficiency of enterprises is affected by problems in the formulation and application of prices, amortization rates, and other factors that are beyond the control of the worker collectives. These problems detract from the analyses of the principal economic indicators. For this reason, this award did not always provide incentives for the most deserving collectives.

On some occasions, enterprises that did not exert proper control over basic, material, and financial resources (which meant that economic data were not reliable), violated prices, or improperly excluded expenses from the cost, or enterprises that produced the supplies which provided the greatest value, to the detriment of the national economy, did obtain earnings and make profits, and did receive this material incentive.

In addition to this, the concept of this award has been called into question. The enterprises with the right to form an incentive fund have achieved a high level of efficiency and therefore face very tight plans. They are at a disadvantage compared to other enterprises that are far behind them in terms of efficiency. There are also enterprises that, at certain times, have managed to attain production levels beyond their design capacity, with

good fulfillment of their economic indicators, and yet they have formed a tiny incentive fund compared to other collectives that cannot boast such positive results.

The most significant example is provided by the enterprises in the commerce sector. They would usually accumulate between 30 and 45 days in the award fund, while the enterprises in the material production sector did not show such a pattern. The disparity lay in distortions in the indicators used for this purpose in the commerce enterprises, as the indicators were not consistent with their basic function of supplying rather than selling.

In view of all these powerful reasons, beginning in 1989 there will be no formation of material incentive funds.

It is not a matter of eliminating this type of incentive for the most outstanding collective. A correctly interpreted and applied material incentive is, without a doubt, a complement to the political-ideological work that we must carry out among the workers, as the preferred weapon in the battle to achieve greater economic efficiency.

Nevertheless, the award fund, as provided in the current economic management system, despite the rectifications that have been introduced in recent years, is neither the most advisable nor the fairest method.

For this reason, from now on new types of material incentives for the efficiency of worker collectives will be studied. This matter will be discussed during the preparations for the 16th Congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions (CTC), and during the course of this major event for Cuban workers, which will take place during the second half of next year.

Inter-Caribbean

Venezuela Seeks Closer Links With Region

FL0602131489 Bridgetown CANA in English 1838 GMT 5 Feb 89

[Text] Caracas, Venezuela, Feb 5, CANA—The new Venezuelan Administration of President Carlos Andres Perez, which plans increased cooperation with the Caribbean, says it will step up communication links with the region through the Barbados-based CARIBBEAN NEWS AGENCY.

"In the case of the media...we are interested in reaching an agreement with the CARIBBEAN NEWS AGENCY in order to give the CARIBBEAN NEWS AGENCY more penetration in Venezuela and give Venezuela more representation in the Caribbean," Pastor Heydras, the director of the Central Office of Communication, told CANA.

Perez, who was sworn in on Thursday, said Saturday that he wanted to increase cooperation between the Latin American and Caribbean regions. Perez had given a similar message to Caribbean leaders with whom he met earlier in the week to discuss bilateral and multilateral issues.

On Saturday he also gave Heydras the "all clear" to enunciate a communication plan as part of the administrations new policy towards the Caribbean. Heydras said his office planned a series of meetings to find out how this arrangement could also bolster trade and other information between Venezuela and the Caribbean. "What I am doing is President Perez's complete, precise instructions in what will be his new policy towards the Caribbean islands and full Caribbean as well," he said.

Dominican Republic

Cuba's Castro Confirms Plans To Visit

PA0402224289 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2122 GMT 4 Feb 89

[Text] Santo Domingo, 4 Feb (EFE)—Cuban President Fidel Castro confirmed today that he will visit the Dominican Republic, accepting an invitation extended to him by President Joaquin Balaguer on 2 February.

The article, published on the front page of the Santo Domingo newspaper EL NACIONAL, was filed from Caracas by Nelson Encarnacion, its special correspondent, who covered Carlos Andres Perez' inauguration.

According to the article, Castro said he will gladly accept President Balaguer's invitation to visit Santo Domingo on the occasion of the inauguration of a polytechnical school being built with Cuban funds in tribute to Generalissimo Maximo Gomez.

According to the paper, Fidel said the following about the Dominican president: "I had the satisfaction of saying hello to President Balaguer. I was lucky to be seated near him (at President Perez' inauguration). I sat next to him, not him next to me."

"I say this sincerely in view of his leadership role, his working spirit. I appreciate the fact that, despite his eyesight problems, he is capable of making the effort that he does," the Cuban statesman added.

He reiterated that he gladly agreed to visit the country for the inauguration of the polytechnical school and said he also invited Balaguer to visit Cuba whenever the Dominican leader wants.

Haiti

1 Feb Demonstration Held in Miragoane Reported

FL0402184889 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1400 GMT 2 Feb 89

[Text] In the Miragoane area, there was a demonstration yesterday in (Carrefour Derizo)—again over this same business of contraband. Here is Yves Marie Jasmin with the details:

[Begin Jasmin recording] Things are not over in Miragoane, in the (Carrefour Derizo) area.

On Wednesday, 1 February 1989, it was barely 0800 before the demonstrators were out in the streets again. The racketeers, street vendors, wharf workers, and so forth who made up this demonstration—and who were chanting many nasty slogans against the president of the military government, General Prosper Avril—headed for [words indistinct], where they turned all the children attending Ecole Saint Therese out of school. The demonstration then turned the students at College Saint Jean Baptiste, Ecole Nationale, Lycee (Jacques Prevert), Ecole (Amelissa Lee), the monks' school, and the nuns' school in (Bel-Air) out of school, too.

Also, the demonstration shut down all the public offices in Miragoane, including the post office, the tax office, the prefecture, the court of conciliation, and the bank. The demonstration also lowered all the flags flying over public buildings, except for the school district and health district offices, which would shut their doors now and then, and the Teleco [Telecommunications d'Haiti, the national telephone company] offices, which remained open throughout.

According to a Miragoane military district source, both soldiers who were posted in front of the bank offices quickly got transfers and travel orders to go to the barracks in Anse-a-Veau and Baradere.

From (Gros Trou) to (Carrefour Derizo), there were tires burning—and smoke rising—to block traffic along National Highway No 2. However, things were more tense there on 31 January, because on 1 February the commander of the military district intervened.

As we went back to the Miragoane wharf, we found that the vessel ("Lolotte") had unloaded—so as to be able to unload other merchandise—more than 10 automobiles that had been on the vessel's bridge [as heard]. However, the ship's owner promised that the vehicles would be reloaded.

Before ending our report, we point out that the organizers of this demonstration had also forced a group of young schoolchildren to participate in everything the demonstrators were doing in the street. For this reason, many parents who would like to see their children go to school without problems are asking how long this is going to go on.

This is RTNH, the national radio, in Miragoane, and I am Yves Marie Jasmin. [end recording]

UNDH Denounces Preparations for 9 Feb Forum

FL0402014089 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1400 GMT 2 Feb 89

[Text] In connection with the 9 February national forum, the UNDH [National Union of Haitian Democrats] says that the duly registered political party UNDH, a party legally recognized by the Ministry of Interior and National Defense and by the Ministry of Justice, regrets to inform its members and sympathizers that it was not invited to participate in the preparatory work for the forum that the government, within a democratic perspective, is planning to hold next 9 February at the Legislative Palace. The UNDH learned about the resolution adopted—arbitrarily, says the UNDH—during this preparatory work over the radio and television.

Further on in its press release, the UNDH says: A forum is a place for all currents of thought, all political leanings, to meet, (?and its purpose is) to reveal the points where all these currents and leanings can meet.

Because it is upset over this matter—an initiative it considers unpatriotic—the UNDH, within the framework of its call to reconciliation, participation, and concerted action, denounces this conspiracy to the nation, a plot whose goal is to render even more serious the division that exists within the Haitian family.

The press release is signed by Jean L. Theagene, president of the UNDH.

Schools in Petit Goave Remain Closed 3 Feb

FL0402191289 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in Creole 1700 GMT 3 Feb 89

[Report by Petit Goave correspondent Marcel Thomas]

[Excerpt] There was no school in Petit Goave today. Today neither students nor teachers showed up, but everything is calm and there are no demonstrations going on.

Many people do not understand this attitude. People are wondering if those with moral authority—school directors and so forth—shouldn't say something about this, considering that it is a minority that is causing panic. Should everyone else have to suffer because of them?

For the moment, the town is calm. Commerce and public offices are functioning normally. [passage omitted]

Further on Romain Extradition Request

FL0402190589 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1400 GMT 3 Feb 89

[Excerpt] The Dominican authorities this week asked the Haitian Government to submit to them in Spanish the Franck Romain dossier, which the Haitian Government submitted to them last month [in French]. General Avril's government last week officially requested through diplomatic channels that the former Port-au-Prince mayor be returned to Haiti. Former Mayor Romain is denounced by the public hue and cry as being the principal author of the 11 September massacre at Saint Jean Bosco Church.

The Dominican authorities say that there is no extradition treaty between Haiti and the Dominican Republic, and that the only reason they would accept the request was for humanitarian reasons. [sentence as heard]

According to a Haitian Foreign Ministry official, a copy of Romain's criminal dossier in Spanish will be sent to the Dominican Foreign Ministry soon. [passage omitted]

Bishop Protests Treatment of Haitians Abroad

FL0402192089 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 3 Feb 89

[Excepts] On the occasion of the 14th anniversary of his consecration, the bishop of Cap-Haitien, Msgr Francois Gayot, asked the authorities to stop mistreating the Haitian people, a people that are obliged to run off and try to make a living outside of Haiti—which is why they die like dogs in foreign countries. Here is our correspondent, from Cap-Haitien:

[Begin correspondent (Curis Maxino) recording] [Passage omitted] The monsignor denounced the mistreatment of Haitians in the cane fields of the Dominican Republic. [passage omitted] Msgr Gayot says they are continuing to treat Haitians like dogs; that is what is currently happening in the neighboring nation. He says he most vigorously protests the way they are treating Haitians, some of who have just died in the Dominican Republic. They are mistreated as they are taken to the cane camps; when there are accidents, their cadavers are given as much consideration as a dog's. They dump them into a hole like animals.

Msgr Gayot says it is time to stop the mistreatment of the Haitian people, because that is why they go to seek a living abroad and die like dogs in foreign countries. [passage omitted]

The monsignor also spoke of his project to set up a Catholic university in Cap-Haitien. He said he would everything possible to expedite things. [passage omitted]

Vigilance Brigades Formed in Cabaret, Arcahaie

FL0402190189 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1400 GMT 2 Feb 89

[Excerpts] The population of Arcahaie and Cabaret has been obliged to set up vigilance brigades to watch for thieves, who are doing away with everything in the area. [passage omitted]

Here is [correspondent] Marc Leslie Ambroise with the details:

[Begin Ambroise recording] The population of Cabaret and Arcahaie has been sleeping with one eye open for some time now because of the insecurity that has spread throughout that area. It seems that the situation has now become so serious that the population does not sleep at night. Almost everyone on the plain is keeping watch. There are vigilance brigades all over in the hopes of catching one of the thieves.

Thus, the population is laying the problem before the pertinent authorities, asking them to do something about this crisis that is doing them in—asking them to put a stop to (?these thieves) because the population cannot sleep at night.

On Wednesday night [31 January], the thieves went all over Arcahaie, finally visiting three or four houses along the road from Saint Medard to Arcahaie.

They failed to get into one of these houses, for there were people keeping watch. A few soldiers were patrolling in the streets. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Jamaica

Seaga Plan To Combat Violence Reported

FL0402164689 Bridgetown CANA in English 1549 GMT 4 Feb 89

[Text] Kingston, Jamaica, Feb 4, CANA—Jamaica Prime Minister Edward Seaga said Friday he has met with security personnel and formulated a plan to combat election-related violence. Seaga, speaking at a news conference, also repeated charges that the opposition People's National Party [PNP] is planning a campaign of violence designed to intimidate supporters of the ruling Jamaica Labour Party [JLP] from voting in Thursday's general election.

The PNP has denied the charge, calling it "public mischief" and urged the prime minister to make public any evidence he has of such a plot.

Seaga, who is trailing the PNP in public opinion polls, said the report came from "government intelligence" and he could not reveal the source. But he said he had

met earlier this week with the chief of the Jamaica Defence Force and Minister of National Security Errol Anderson to "set in motion certain plans for the containment of violence."

He refused to be specific about the security measures. "That would be telling the cat where the canaries are," he said.

Two people were killed in Seaga's parliamentary constituency Thursday when hundreds of PNP supporters marched through a predominantly JLP area. It is not clear from eye witness reports whether the victims were killed by party supporters or police assigned to keep the crowd under control.

Seaga also said at the conference, called to unveil new figures that puts unemployment to an almost record low of 18.2 percent, that election violence has been confined to a few urban areas and that this year's election is much less violent than the island's last contested general election in 1980.

Prime Minister Censured for Allegations

FL0402172589 Bridgetown CANA in English 1716 GMT 4 Feb 89

[Text] Kingston, Jamaica. Feb 4, CANA—Prime Minister Edward Seaga has been mildly censured by the ombudsman appointed to police Jamaica's political conduct for allegations that the opposition People's National Party [PNP] planned to unleash violence to intimidate voters.

The ombudsman, retired Judge James Kerr, said Seaga's charge at a public meeting six days ago was "ill-timed and unhelpful in diffusing political tensions." "On enquiry, the commissioner of police, by letter dated 2nd February 1989, advised that to date the police had no complaint to substantiate the accusations that the PNP plans violence," Kerr told the parties Friday.

Seaga repeated the allegation Friday to reporters that the PNP planned the violence in seven marginal constituencies. Seaga and opposition PNP leader, Michael Manley, last August signed a code of political conduct aimed at reducing political violence here.

Kerr's job is to apportion political blame for acts of violence or breaches of the accord he is asked to investigate. However, the agreement presumes that an inter-party committee will first try to discuss problems to reduce tensions.

Kerr, who last month criticised Manley for remarks made late last year, said that Seaga's allegations and the manner in which they were made, could cause widespread alarm and alert the conspirators, if there were any. "...The mode and manner of his disclosure could only impede police investigations while causing widespread alarm," the ombudsman said.

Meantime, PNP leader Manley described Seaga's statement as "a total falsehood", and questioned whether the prime minister was "creating a smoke screen" for acts he intended to perpetuate. "I hope this is not an instance of this technique," Manley said in a letter to churches.

And the PNP's general secretary, Paul Robertson, charged Seaga with going on a "scorched earth policy." Saying that Seaga was sure of losing the February 9 elections here, Robertson claimed that the prime minister was attempting to drive away tourists and investors in a bid to undermine the economy.

Security Forces Vote Early in Elections

FL0602124189 Bridgetown CANA in English 1939 GMT 4 Feb 89

[Text] Kingston, Jamaica, Feb 4, CANA—Jamaica's security forces were casting their ballots here Saturday, 6 days before the rest of the country votes in general elections.

The 10,000 police and soldiers were required to vote early to be free to carry out security duties on election day. Their ballots will be counted with the rest on election night.

The contest for the 60 seats in the House on Representatives is almost a straight fight between Prime Minister Edward Seaga's Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) and Michael Manley's People's National Party (PNP).

Opinion polls give Manley's a significant lead but Seaga has been predicting a close election, saying that about half the constituencies could go either way.

Costa Rica

Cerezo, Arias Discuss Peace Process, Parliament

PA0802035389 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 1200 GMT 7 Feb 89

[Text] Guatemalan and Costa Rican Presidents Vinicio Cerezo and Oscar Arias are primarily concerned about three specific aspects of the peace process. One of these aspects deals with verification and security. The two presidents agreed that a security mechanism should be devised to ensure that the Esquipulas II accord and the plan approved in San Jose in January 1988 are both complied with at the Honduran-Nicaraguan border and at the Nicaraguan-Salvadoran border. This mechanism would seek to prevent activities, in any of these countries, that would support groups engaged in violent actions against other countries.

Democratization and political opportunities are important for everybody and essential for the peace process, although there are deep differences between the countries. Cerezo said the idea is to consolidate democracy and that the creation of the Central American parliament will be emphasized within this context. He also said the Central American parliament offers an opportunity to solve problems in the five area countries.

Cerezo also pointed out that the area presidents are concerned that currently there is a lesser degree of development in the process of creating political openings in Nicaragua. The establishment of the proper conditions for pluralistic ideological participation has encountered the greatest obstacles in this country. The Central American parliament would pave the way for free elections supervised by international organizations in Nicaragua, just as has happened in other countries.

The Central American countries would economically benefit from the Central American parliament. The United Nations would establish a program, with resources from several countries, worth approximately $2 billion that would be spent in solving the problems of the Central American nations every year. One of the requirements to implement this plan would be to establish formulas for Central American integration. The Central American parliament is regarded as the quickest and most practical of these formulas.

With the creation of the Central American parliament, a dialogue would be established to create a process for the joint solution of problems common to all the area countries. In addition, the parliament would help consolidate the pacification process. Thus, political openings in all the area countries would be guaranteed.

Cerezo, who visited San Jose for 20 hours, met with Arias, with whom he analyzed the peace process and the possibility of presenting joint proposals at the Central American presidents summit meeting to be held on 13 and 14 February.

Foreign Minister on Verification, Peace Plan

PA0702134489 Mexico City EXCELSIOR in Spanish 25 Jan 89 pp 2-A, 38-A

["Part II" of report by Jose Melendez on "exclusive interview" with Costa Rican Foreign Minister Rodrigo Madrigal Nieto in San Jose on 24 January]

[Text] San Jose, 24 Jan—Costa Rican Foreign Minister Rodrigo Madrigal Nieto has said that the stalemate in the Central American peace process is not due to the "absence" of the Contadora and Support Groups but to "a lack of commitment" by some area countries to comply with Esquipulas II.

In an exclusive interview with EXCELSIOR's correspondent, the Costa Rican foreign minister said that the Contadora and Support Groups lacked sufficient "authority or power" to make the Central American governments finalize the regional peace plan. In January 1988, the five Central American presidents, meeting in this country, agreed to exclude the Contadora Group (comprising Mexico, Panama, Venezuela, and Colombia) and the Support Group (comprising Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, and Peru) and OAS and UN Secretaries General Joao Baena Soares and Javier Perez de Cuellar, respectively, from the commission in charge of verifying and following up on Esquipulas II compliance.

The 1987 peace plan signed by the region's presidents in Esquipulas had made the Contadora and Support Groups, the OAS, and the United Nations key mechanisms in verifying implementation of the peace plan.

However, the verification commission was dissolved at the request of Guatemala and El Salvador, with Costa Rica's support. It was decided that Central American foreign ministers would establish an executive commission in charge of verifying and following up on the agreements.

Madrigal Nieto believes that the exclusion of the other Latin American countries and international organizations from this task has not harmed the peace process, although the Central American governments were left to monitor their own actions.

Asked if this had any bearing on the recent stalemate in the negotiations and if it is possible that the aforementioned groups and international organizations may again become involved in the verification tasks, Madrigal Nieto said: "I do not think last year's stalemate in the peace process was simply caused by the absence of the Contadora and Support Groups. The stalemate was largely the result of a lack of commitment by some countries to make fundamental changes that would lead to democratization."

The foreign minister added that if those groups had participated in the recent peace efforts, "the most they could have achieved is to prove that there have been no such changes. This has been proven and is no longer a matter of discussion.

"Therefore, nothing new would have been added (to the peace efforts) because the Contadora and Support Groups would have eventually demonstrated their lack of authority or power to make the others (the Central American countries) take action. "We would have been in the same situation as we are now. The only difference would be that outsiders to the region would have told us what we Central Americans are now telling ourselves."

Madrigal Nieto took advantage of this question to explain: "I am not opposed to the Contadora and Support Groups taking responsibility for a specific verification duty." He added: "We are already consigning a specific mission to two European countries (Spain and the FRG) and Canada to deal with the verification of security matters.

"El Salvador is now proposing the creation of a commission composed of five 'outstanding' Central American figures—five men and women. I believe that other proposals will emerge between now and the beginning of the fourth regional summit meeting (in mid-February)."

The Costa Rican foreign minister said that the basic problem in Central America is "to find a way to strengthen our countries' political commitment to fulfill the Esquipulas II agreements.

"I would not object to giving a specific verification task to the Contadora Group so that its judgment would have moral authority that it otherwise would lack, but we have not agreed on what task should be assigned to it."

All issues relating to verification will be studied by the area presidents at their meeting in El Salvador in February.

Foreign Minister Madrigal reiterated that "looking to the future, I like the idea of having the Central American countries questioning and watching over each other and doing all that is necessary to make progress."

Madrigal Nieto added: "Many nations are experiencing serious internal conflicts, some of which are as bad or worse than ours, including dictatorships, bloodshed caused by drug trafficking, guerrilla movements, and internal strife.

"No one, however, dares say: 'Let us intervene in those countries.' No one dares say: 'Let us appoint a group of countries to intervene to try to solve problems in those countries.' No one dares say something like that, because people regard those countries as sovereign, as being able to solve their own problems, regardless of how serious they are or how many thousands of deaths may have been caused."

Madrigal said: "It seems to me that it is time for Central America to gain that 'status' and for all Central Americans to contribute to finding solutions to our problems. For a long time, Central America was called a Banana Rebublic. Each Central American country was considered to be a large banana farm under the supervision of a good or bad foreman. Today we cannot be mock democracies."

Madrigal added: "I have approved of the area foreign ministers meeting as often as necessary to talk frankly and to try to find solutions to our own problems.

"I believe that if we say that we cannot accomplish this or that, that three or more superpowers have to come and solve our problems, then we will lose our status as independent nations and our strength. We must bequeath stronger, more solid, and more independent nations to our children."

Madrigal explained: "Latin American countries can give the area great support. They can help develop specific plans, and they can advocate democracy in the area. That would be a great support. Central Americans can say: 'Well, this nation, Mexico, and such-and-such nations—please come study our problems and help us solve them.' That could happen, but it is necessary that we Central Americans find overall solutions to our problems.

"Do you believe that Washington likes this recovery of Central American unity? In addition to calling Central America a Banana Rebublic, in Washington it has been said that Central America is the backyard of the United States.

"I have never wondered whether or not Washington likes our unity. I believe that the United States would be ignoring facts if it refused to recognize Central American unity, which means that we are determined to solve our own problems.

"They would be refusing to face facts, and they would be ignorant of what is going on around them. I, however, have no reason to believe that the United States does not support Central American unity."

Madrigal said that relations between Costa Rica and Mexico are "excellent and we cooperate in many areas, including educational, financial, cultural, and scientific fields."

Madrigal said that he and Mexican Foreign Secretary Solana, who will visit San Jose on 25 January, "will discuss common issues such as matters regarding coffee harvests, the foreign debt, and so on."

Obviously pleased, Madrigal asserted: "There are no problems between our two countries. On the contrary, we plan to discuss topics that will strengthen and promote our relations."

El Salvador

FMLN Communique Proposes 60-Day Cease-Fire

PA0702174789 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 0013 GMT 8 Feb 89

[Communique issued by the FMLN in El Salvador on 7 February]

[Text] The FMLN, 15 days after having submitted our peace proposal to the government, the Legislative Assembly, and the Armed Forces, hereby states the following:

1. We have noted a lazy and irresponsible attitude by the other party involved. We have awaited a reply or serious counterproposals through intermediaries, but what we have seen is incoherence, a lack of interest, and an unwillingness to reach an agreement. We are familiar with certain people's strategy of putting off a decision until 19 March, which would invalidate the proposal. Those who are thinking this way should realize that the war is continuing and discontent has continued to increase.

2. The Armed Forces, a basic arm of power, has remained silent. It would be naive to believe that the proposal is a matter to be handled by the government and political parties. Real power resides in the hands of the Armed Forces, and their silence can only be interpreted as a stalling tactic. At this stage of development, it is necessary for the Armed Forces to clarify their position, because without their participation, implementation of the proposal would be impossible.

3. There has been a spiralling increase in assassinations and in arrests of leaders and rank-and-file members of the popular movement, mass dismissals of strikers, torture of political prisoners, militarization of the university, and large-scale repression of peasants in the interior. This fosters a climate of terror, and in such conditions it is very difficult to carry out a peace proposal.

In view of all the above, we state:

1. It is urgent to end the delay and demagoguery in implementing our proposal, the only one that provides true prospects for peace.

2. We reiterate that a postponement of the elections is essential and that they must be held on the date we proposed, 15 September. Otherwise, there would be no sincerity or guarantees that the commitments proposed by the two sides would be met.

3. We call upon the Armed Forces to clearly define their position and indicate if they are prepared to end their repression and to confine all their forces to the barracks the day of the voting to allow the elections that we propose to be a totally civil event free of pressures.

4. As a new demonstration of goodwill, we are willing to include in the proposal agreements and in the mechanisms for their implementation, the negotiation and arrangement, with the Armed Forces, of a 60-day cease-fire—30 days before and 30 days after the elections—to allow the electoral process we are proposing to take place without fighting and without repression and for the voting to take place without a military presence from either side.

Our proposal is a generous peace offer to channel our energies and the current social turmoil into a peaceful electoral process under conditions of equality and honesty that will permit a new social realignment and consensus. We are, therefore, proposing that we measure our strength in the political arena through elections whose clean and clear results would show both sides the infeasibility of the war.

In this way, we are making an offer to irreversibly open the way to peace. No one should fear as long as there is no fraud in the elections. A lasting peace is the only solution for all.

We call for consideration of the following:

1. The FMLN has shown a tremendous degree of flexibility in its position; however, an attempt has been made to demand everything from the FMLN without the other side giving up anything. It is politically absurd to ask for our surrender at a time when the whole counterinsurgency plan is extremely weak and when it is evident that the war—amid a serious social crisis—is spreading throughout the country and reaching the cities after $3 billion has been invested in the counterinsurgency campaign and after the Army has murdered thousands of people without being able to defeat or stop the FMLN.

2. Our proposal was violently rejected at first by all those to whom it was addressed and the inconsistent argument that it was unconstitutional and the positive reaction of the masses and the United States is what led them to tone down their language. However, Duarte and the government reiterated their rejection and the Christian Democratic Party and ARENA [Nationalist Republican Alliance] engaged in demagogic election campaign diatribes and played games with the positive reaction of the masses, and the Legislative Assembly simply shelved it. Therefore, we do not perceive any sincerity or willingness to achieve peace.

3. Through our willingness to conclude a cease-fire with the Armed Forces, we are giving further proof that our proposal is serious and we ask the other side to act likewise. It is neither logical nor politically wise to try to force us to accept the presence during the voting of the Armed Forces, bearing in mind their record of fraud and repression and the fact that they have traumatized and terrorized the people. Seventy thousand Salvadorans have been murdered and not a single military man has been tried for those murders. The professionalization of

the Army is a lie. If the Armed Forces truly believe that they are professionals, they should not fear our proposal. Instead, they should readily agree to it.

[Signed] Commanders Roberto Roca, Shafik Handal, Leonel Gonzalez, Ferman Cienfuegos, and Joaquin Villalobos
El Salvador, 6 February 1989

[(Clandestine) Radio Farabundo Marti in Spanish to El Salvador at 2308 GMT on 7 Feb and San Salvador Radio Cadena YSU in Spanish at 1608 GMT on 7 Feb also broadcast the FMLN cease-fire proposal. Reception of Radio Farabundo was poor to unmonitorable, but portions of that broadcast, as well as the Radio YSU broadcast have been compared to the Venceremos version and found to be identical.]

Venceremos Commentary Emphasizes Peace Objective
PA0802041189 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 0023 GMT 8 Feb 89

[Station Commentary]

[Text] Everyone is demanding peace, and it is everyone's responsibility. No one, not even our political enemies, has any doubts about the clear and specific plans the FMLN is contributing, in a flexible way, to open a feasible path toward peace in El Salvador. Our proposal to make the elections contribute to peace, our decision not to attack U.S. personnel in response to the new receptiveness on the part of the Bush administration toward our proposal, and our most recent decision to make our offer even more flexible by offering a 60-day truce, all constitute unequivocal and specific evidence of our true political desire for peace.

On the other hand, we have not received from the government, the political parties, or the Armed Forces an open-minded and rational attitude that corresponds to our serious proposal. They are bogged down in a series of arguments and meetings that only agree to meet again, which is a delaying tactic and shows very little desire for an agreement. The attitude of the Armed Forces is even worse, as it has only said, naively, that this is a political proposal for politicians, and they hide behind the government and the Legislative Assembly to avoid giving an answer.

It is no secret that the regime's power center is none other than the Armed Forces, and that any government or Legislative Assembly decision must have the support of the Armed Forces. Otherwise, there is no real possibility of implementing any agreement. Large people's organizations—where, by the way one finds the majority of the country's voting population—have publicly and firmly voiced their approval of the proposal, because the national will is for a lasting peace with social justice. In fact, the majority of the people admit the FMLN proposal is a feasible and reasonable option for seeking a political solution to the conflict.

However, the regime has not put an end to repression, arrests, and murders. The most recent case is that of economics student Mario Flores, who was arrested and murdered by the National Guard. Arrests of peasants and of displaced cooperative workers have increased—far from decreasing. As we said in our proposal, it is an absolute requirement that the Armed Forces put an end to repression so that we can have free and democratic elections.

There can be no be peace with repression. The Armed Forces and the government must accept, in a reasonable and serious manner, the fact that postponing the elections will give them credibility. If the elections gain the credibility they currently lack, if the Armed Forces act in a responsible and professional manner and withdraw to their garrisons, if the elections are held in September as a true civic event, why should anyone fear the results? We are [words indistinct] undoubtedly in an electoral event, and the well-known frauds. Why fear giving an opportunity? Why fear a truly democratic event that will provide a real path to peace and will lead to the solution of the conflict?

If there is no fraud, no repression, no intervention by the United States or the military, then clearly we will achieve the peace everyone wants. That is our flexible and serious stand. It is the people's duty and their right to decide to support this proposal wholeheartedly—for peace. We are waiting for a serious official reply from the Armed Forces and the Christian Democratic government. Our political will to achieve a lasting peace is clear. The country awaits a rational approach from the other parties.

Everybody is demanding peace, and it is everyone's responsibility.

Army 'Not Authorized' To Negotiate With Rebels
PA0702224489 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2110 GMT 7 Feb 89

[Text] San Salvador, 7 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—Following a guerrilla proposal for a 60-day military truce for holding the elections "without repression," the high command of the Salvadoran Army warned today that the Armed Forces are not authorized by the Constitution to negotiate peace with anyone.

The military warning came after today's proposal by the guerrillas to negotiate with the Army a 2-month military truce so that the presidential elections—scheduled for 19 March but which, according to the rebels should be held on 15 September—can take place "without repression" and "without any military presence."

Defense Minister General Eugenio Vides Casanova met today with Legislative Assembly deputies to review the rebels'cease-fire proposal and he warned about the dangers of negotiating such an offer.

"If we change the Constitution capriciously to accept the guerrillas' electoral rules, we would be setting a very dangerous precedent," the defense minister said.

A condition of the guerrilla proposal, announced today by the general command of the FMLN on a local radio station, is the postponement of the elections until 15 September.

The FMLN has proposed the negotiation of a cease-fire beginning 30 days before the elections (15 September according to the guerrillas) and ending 30 days later.

Last January 24, the FMLN presented a political proposal in which the guerrillas agreed to accept the legitimacy of the elections if they were postponed and a new electoral framework was negotiated.

On that occasion, the FMLN limited its truce proposal to 5 days—2 days before and 2 days after election day.

Vides Casanova explained that the FMLN's intentions, "which are not very serious," seek to divide the Army and intensify the social, political, and economic crisis to provoke a people's insurrection.

After 15 days of silence, this is the first response by the military authorities to the guerrilla proposal, which has created a wide-ranging national debate on the question of whether or not to postpone the 19 March presidential elections.

Armed Forces Commander on FMLN Proposal

PA0802043689 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0315 GMT 8 Feb 89

[Report by Marco Antonio Guevara; passages within quotation marks recorded]

[Text] The Armed Forces High Command said at the Legislative Assembly that it does not agree with violating the Constitution to favor the FMLN proposal. The Legislative Assembly met this morning with President Duarte, as commander in chief of the Armed Forces; Defense Minister General Carlos Eugenio Vides Casanova; and Armed Forces Chief of Staff Colonel Rene Emilio Ponce.

The Armed Forces High Command trusts the political parties' maturity and will support any resolution they approve concerning the FMLN proposal, the defense minister said following a private meeting with the Legislative Assembly's directorate board and political commission.

[Gen Vides] "I told the political parties: If you want to give them advantages simply because you do not want your candidates to win, go ahead and do it. They must decide whether they want to give away the advantages or not; but I think it would be unjust. A death squad might say: We do not want peace and we will set off bombs until the others change their minds.

"This is not the case right now. We would be simply establishing a precedent. That is the main danger. If the Constitution is changed at will today then it can be changed again tomorrow, and again until things are just as the rebels want them."

The meeting was also attended by Napoleon Duarte, in his role as commander in chief of the Armed Forces.

[Duarte] "I am here as commander in chief of the Armed Forces. I fully support the Armed Forces' decision concerning its unity and the need to [words indistinct] Constitution, and the warning that the Armed Forces will not adopt positions to hinder the democratic process in the country because there has been too much bloodshed and too many lives lost already."

It was reported that the FMLN proposal was thoroughly analyzed during the meeting, and it was agreed that the Constitution cannot be violated to favor minority groups' positions.

The defense minister added: The Armed Forces are stronger than ever. He also referred to the U.S. vice president's visit and said that his views coincide with the Armed Forces' goals, particularly concerning human rights.

The Armed Forces High Command's visit to the Legislative Assembly is considered the second step taken in response to the FMLN's proposal to the Legislative Assembly. The first step was to call a meeting of the the political parties, which was not attended by the Christian Democratic Party but served as the basis for future meetings in a so-called neutral place.

The Legislative Assembly's political commission has not ruled out the possibility of inviting Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas, who is involved to some degree in the rebel proposal.

FMLN Denounces Armed Forces 'Repression'

PA0802024389 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 0040 GMT 8 Feb 89

[Station commentary]

[Text] It is impossible to have free elections in a country where repression prevails. In an indisputable effort of clear flexibility and willingness for peace, the FMLN presented a peace proposal to Jose Napoleon Duarte's government and the Salvadoran Armed Forces High Command. That proposal is aimed at turning elections into a contribution to peace.

Two weeks have passed since we presented our proposal, and neither the government nor the Armed Forces have officially responded to the FMLN initiative. That initiative has had the support of the international community and of our country's largest groups.

Neither the government nor the High Command have responded to the people's outcry and world expectations, which are awaiting a positive response to our proposal.

On the contrary, the government, its Armed Forces, and the members of their squads disguised in civilian clothes continue their dirty war against the peoples movement and their widespread war in the countryside.

The National Guard [word indistinct] murdered university student Mario Flores, whose body was left on a highway near the port of Acajutla. Meanwhile, National Police members who were dressed in civilian clothes seized university students Hugo Martinez and Raul Ramirez, who are still missing.

Jaime Estevez, a member of the Bread, Land, Work, and Freedom Movement [MPTL] was taken to the Usulutan Jail to be murdered and the crime was supposed to go unnoticed.

Meanwhile, according to reports from members of the National Federation of Agricultural and Livestock Cooperatives, FENACOA, on 31 January, Oromontique Battalion troops of the 6th Infantry Brigade commanded by Lieutenant Pacheco murdered peasants Victor Manuel Vasquez and Rafael Romero. The troops faked a clash at Horcones de Berlin Canton to murder those peasants.

On 4 January, Lucia and Maria Asuncion Romero, and minor Pedro Gonzalez Erazo were captured at the Ahuachapan bus station by Army troops commanded by murderer Colonel (Canas).

The Peasant Communal Association, ACC, continues to demand the release of peasants Bartolo Rodriguez, who was captured on 27 January, and [name indistinct] captured on 2 February by troops of Colonel Orlando Montano of the 6th Infantry Brigade.

The nongovernmental Salvadoran Human Rights Commission reported the seizure of Maclovia Gonzalez, Virgilio Ortiz Cruz, and Virgilio Ortiz, who were captured on 4 January by Military Detachment No 4 troops at El Mayuelo Canton, Morazan Department. Their whereabouts are still unknown.

The MPTL also reported that Roberto Mena was captured by Atonal Battalion troops at 1600 on 5 February.

There cannot be free and clean elections in this atmosphere of repression. The government and the Army High Command continue terrifying and killing the Salvadoran people. The peoples' will cannot be expressed through their vote with such an atmosphere of repression, especially if the groups disputing power are a bunch of murderers and corrupt men.

NOTIMEX Cited on FMLN Election Financing

PA0702032189 San Salvador EL MUNDO in Spanish 31 Jan 89 p 7

[Text] The FMLN may invest from $3 million to $5 million in the elections if it reaches agreement with the various internal groups and if elections are held after 19 March, high-ranking guerrilla spokesmen have reported in Panama.

The Mexican news agency NOTIMEX, which is responsible for the information sent to EL MUNDO, notes that "the work would be directed by the FMLN propaganda director, who is certain of an FMLN triumph because its militants are capable and have proven this militarily."

In the peace proposal delivered a week ago to the political parties, the Legislative Assembly, the government, and the Armed Forces, the rebels maintain that if an agreement is reached, they "would officially call on their rank and file to support and vote for the Democratic Convergence (CD), because this is the people's only alternative."

According to NOTIMEX, the postponement of the elections to 15 September—which the FMLN proposal calls for—would help the rebels set up an "electoral machine," because they have the most coherent political group in the nation and have "militants tested in combat who have endured the harshest repression."

Sources consulted in this respect said: "If the guerrillas now see themselves involved in an organized campaign, their skills will be much more developed and better that those of other parties, new organizations, and many of the traditional political organizations." "If we participate in the elections, we will do so in an overwhelming manner. We have already secured the financial resources to at least equal the multimillion dollar efforts of ARENA [Nationalist Republican Alliance] and the Christian Democrats," the FMLN said. This would imply an investment of $3 million to $5 million in the campaign.

The guerrillas are aware that the "Bush administration views the rebels as a serious and strong political and military revolutionary movement, and the peace proposal they have presented has helped them gain more political openings and respect." The rebels maintain that "if there were forces and governments that in the past were reluctant to support the FMLN, they are now anxious to help us join the country's political scene."

We are not going to make such a proposal if we are not certain of our electoral potential, the rebels added. It is necessary to determine the voids, the errors, the accusations, and the frustration that makes our proposals stand out and which makes us an alternative for the voters." [quotation marks as published]

"Add up the number of our combatants, the masses organized in the displaced peoples' camps, and the people in the cities, and you will see that no one in El Salvador has the electoral power we have, which totals tens of thousands of Salvadorans," the FMLN told NOTIMEX.

The FMLN noted that they are not giving up or eliminating the armed struggle to attain power, but rather are changing their direction because they would "attain an overwhelming victory" anyway. In addition, the White House and the State Department themselves have maintained that the FMLN proposal deserves serious consideration and have thus opened channels with the FMLN.

"We already have a plan; we are seeking negotiations, which we have struggled for during 8 years. Let them tear themselves apart with mutual charges of fraud and corruption. We offer specific peace proposals. This will be our banner, and this will undoubtedly lead us to triumph in the elections," the FMLN concluded.

D'Aubuisson Rejects Links to Romero's Murder

PA0702230089 San Salvador LA PRENSA GRAFICA in Spanish 7 Feb 89 p 2

[Text] Major Roberto D'Aubuisson yesterday stated: "I have withstood the lowest slander for 8 years. God Almighty and my conscience know I had nothing to do with that repudiated murder.

"Every time there are elections, we hear the same rumors that there is evidence about Msgr Oscar Arnulfo Romero's case and that it will be presented. Thus, a great show is presented, but once the elections are over no one remembers that martyr of the church.

"Duarte's government, supported by the Christian Democratic Party, PDC, resorts to vile defamation, slander, and lies against its political opponents because it cannot hide its corruption."

This statement was issued by the National Republican Alliance, ARENA, deputy to reject the announcement issued by the government, "in a national radio and television network," that implicated D'Aubuisson "in Msgr Oscar Arnulfo Romero's death."

"I am sorry I did not see the broadcast, but others have commented on it. I can very well imagine all the despicable things that were irresponsibly said to twist the truth so the PDC could again use Msgr Romero's death as an election issue. It is all part of the PDC's propaganda, but the truth will always prevail," D'Aubuisson said.

"The most reprehensible thing is that the Duarte administration uses radio and television stations, openly abusing its authority, to slander me—simply because I am the PDC's political adversary, and because the PDC has no excuse to justify the crisis that has been caused by its corruption."

D'Aubuisson added: The Christian Democrats' "lie" is aimed at deceiving Salvadoran Catholics. That is despicable and unspeakable, because they are insulting Msgr Romero's memory.

The PDC has governed the country for 8 years. The PDC controlled the Attorney General's Office when Msgr Romero was killed. The crucial question is: Why weren't the necessary measures taken to clarify the case at the time? Why does the government claim it has the evidence yet fails to present it? Ah, because this would end the government's political game of saying that it is investigating Msgr Romero's death! This entire attitude is reprehensible, D'Aubuisson stated.

He asserted: I am aware of the PDC's incredible plot to slander me, but the PDC only says what is convenient. It is a dirty game but God is my witness; my conscience is clear. The Salvadoran people know my great crime has been to struggle against the Marxist-Leninists. The PDC cannot forgive me for this because they are closely linked with those who "are green on the outside [reference to the PDC's party colors] but red on the inside." However, I will continue struggling like a good Salvadoran so the "turncoats" do not betray us, as was the case in Nicaragua, Major Roberto D'Aubuisson Arrieta emphasized.

FMLN Reports 109 Army Casualties 29 Jan-4 Feb

PA0602180189

[Editorial Report] (Clandestine) Radio Farabundo Marti in Spanish to El Salvador at 2200 GMT on 5 February broadcasts approximately 10 minutes of battle reports covering the period 29 January to 4 February.

According to the station, during this period government forces sustained 109 casualties, broken down as follows: 64 as the result of attacks or combat, 37 in ambushes, and 8 as the result of government troops stepping on mines. The casualties reportedly included a sergeant, two corporals, and a Civilian Defense commander.

The report adds that on 29 and 30 January, the FMLN carried out the subregional maneuver "Our People Fight Bravely for Peace and Liberty." The FMLN reportedly attacked La Laguna, Concepcion Quezaltepeque, La Palma, San Ignacio, San Miguel de Mercedes, and (El

Chique), all in Chalatenango, and inflicted 55 casualties on the enemy, 45 of which were inflicted on the 4th Infantry Brigade's Azmitia Battalion.

The station reports that on 30 January, guerrilla forces occupied Yamabal and Sensenbra in Morazan, where Military Detachment No 4's Cacaguatique Battalion troops fled in disarray. The station adds: "Another important action this week resulted in 20 casualties inflicted on the National Guard during a 29 January ambush on the Ilobasco-San Isidro Highway, Cabanas Department. In addition, clandestine militias ambushed 2d Infantry Brigade troops on the Santa Ana-San Salvador Freeway, near El Bejuco. This action resulted in nine government casualties, counting dead and wounded." The station reports in conclusion that the FMLN launched five ambushes this week "with the outstanding participation of clandestine militias."

Honduras

President Azcona Recognizes Paraguayan Government

PA0702184089 Panama City ACAN in Spanish
2307 GMT 6 Feb 89

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 6 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—Honduran President Jose Azcona Hoyo today recognized the Paraguayan provisional government ruled since 3 February by General Andres Rodriguez following the overthrow of Alfredo Stroessner.

Referring to Stroessner, Azcona stated that "nobody has a right to govern a country for 34 years," and that, "inevitably, during such a long term of office, the people are subjected to arbitrary behavior and abuses."

The Honduran Government believes the violent overthrow of General Stroessner will benefit Latin American democracy in general, and Paraguay in particular.

Azcona said: "We have to wait and see how the situation develops, whether elections are held within 90 days, and whether the opposition is allowed to participate, as necessary steps for democracy in Paraguay."

After Stroessner's overthrow, Paraguayan Interior Minister Sabino Augusto Montanaro requested political asylum in the Honduran Embassy in Paraguay.

Azcona referred to that incident, stating that "perhaps he went there because it was the closest embassy available to Montanaro."

The president called a news conference today to report on his recent trip to Venezuela, where he traveled last week as a guest at the inauguration of the new Venezuelan president, Social Democrat Carlos Andres Perez.

Suspected Assassins of Contra Leader Meet Press

PA0702172589 Panama City ACAN in Spanish
2252 GMT 6 Feb 89

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 6 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—The Honduran police today presented to reporters two of the presumed killers of contra commander Manuel Rugama Acevedo, alias "Aureliano." One of the men accused an official of the Nicaraguan Embassy in Tegucigalpa of involvement in the crime.

"Aureliano," considered to be the second in command of the Nicaraguan contras, was gunned down by an unidentified group in Tegucigalpa's northern outskirts on 7 January after attending a working meeting with other rebel leaders.

The police detained Hondurans Juan Bautista and Rigoberto Matute and Nicaraguan Luis Ordonez, who are being held as suspects in Aureliano's murder. Other suspects are still being pursued.

Only Bautista and Ordonez were presented to reporters. Matute is being held outside Tegucigalpa as a witness in the case.

Ordonez said he "participated only as a go-between" so Jose de Jesus Pena, the Nicaraguan Embassy official, could meet Matute, who worked as a messenger for Ordonez at the exchange office he runs in Tegucigalpa.

Ordonez added: "I was aware that Pena wanted to get rid of somebody, but I never learned who they were going to kill until 'Aureliano' was eliminated."

Ordonez also said he worked for the Somoza regime, that he later aided the contras financially in Honduras, particularly the rebel Indian organization MISURASATA [Miskito, Sumu, and Rama Sandinist Unity], and that Widclife Diego, a MISURASATA leader, owes him $25,000.

Ordonez said further that he provided information on the contras several times to the Nicaraguan Embassy through Pena, who gave him $1,000 almost every month.

Ordonez denied that he participated directly in the crime: "On Saturday, 7 January, when 'Aureliano' was killed, I was at a cock fight in El Progreso" on Honduras' northern coast.

Ordonez said: "I also was in touch with the Honduran secret police, one of whose lieutenants, working for Interpol, called me up a few days ago. He told me later, however, that other officers wanted to see me. That is how I was detained."

We are not going to make such a proposal if we are not certain of our electoral potential, the rebels added. It is necessary to determine the voids, the errors, the accusations, and the frustration that makes our proposals stand out and which makes us an alternative for the voters." [quotation marks as published]

"Add up the number of our combatants, the masses organized in the displaced peoples' camps, and the people in the cities, and you will see that no one in El Salvador has the electoral power we have, which totals tens of thousands of Salvadorans," the FMLN told NOTIMEX.

The FMLN noted that they are not giving up or eliminating the armed struggle to attain power, but rather are changing their direction because they would "attain an overwhelming victory" anyway. In addition, the White House and the State Department themselves have maintained that the FMLN proposal deserves serious consideration and have thus opened channels with the FMLN.

"We already have a plan; we are seeking negotiations, which we have struggled for during 8 years. Let them tear themselves apart with mutual charges of fraud and corruption. We offer specific peace proposals. This will be our banner, and this will undoubtedly lead us to triumph in the elections," the FMLN concluded.

D'Aubuisson Rejects Links to Romero's Murder

PA0702230089 San Salvador LA PRENSA GRAFICA in Spanish 7 Feb 89 p 2

[Text] Major Roberto D'Aubuisson yesterday stated: "I have withstood the lowest slander for 8 years. God Almighty and my conscience know I had nothing to do with that repudiated murder.

"Every time there are elections, we hear the same rumors that there is evidence about Msgr Oscar Arnulfo Romero's case and that it will be presented. Thus, a great show is presented, but once the elections are over no one remembers that martyr of the church.

"Duarte's government, supported by the Christian Democratic Party, PDC, resorts to vile defamation, slander, and lies against its political opponents because it cannot hide its corruption."

This statement was issued by the National Republican Alliance, ARENA, deputy to reject the announcement issued by the government, "in a national radio and television network," that implicated D'Aubuisson "in Msgr Oscar Arnulfo Romero's death."

"I am sorry I did not see the broadcast, but others have commented on it. I can very well imagine all the despicable things that were irresponsibly said to twist the truth so the PDC could again use Msgr Romero's death as an election issue. It is all part of the PDC's propaganda, but the truth will always prevail," D'Aubuisson said.

"The most reprehensible thing is that the Duarte administration uses radio and television stations, openly abusing its authority, to slander me—simply because I am the PDC's political adversary, and because the PDC has no excuse to justify the crisis that has been caused by its corruption."

D'Aubuisson added: The Christian Democrats' "lie" is aimed at deceiving Salvadoran Catholics. That is despicable and unspeakable, because they are insulting Msgr Romero's memory.

The PDC has governed the country for 8 years. The PDC controlled the Attorney General's Office when Msgr Romero was killed. The crucial question is: Why weren't the necessary measures taken to clarify the case at the time? Why does the government claim it has the evidence yet fails to present it? Ah, because this would end the government's political game of saying that it is investigating Msgr Romero's death! This entire attitude is reprehensible, D'Aubuisson stated.

He asserted: I am aware of the PDC's incredible plot to slander me, but the PDC only says what is convenient. It is a dirty game but God is my witness; my conscience is clear. The Salvadoran people know my great crime has been to struggle against the Marxist-Leninists. The PDC cannot forgive me for this because they are closely linked with those who "are green on the outside [reference to the PDC's party colors] but red on the inside." However, I will continue struggling like a good Salvadoran so the "turncoats" do not betray us, as was the case in Nicaragua, Major Roberto D'Aubuisson Arrieta emphasized.

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The report adds that on 29 and 30 January, the FMLN carried out the subregional maneuver "Our People Fight Bravely for Peace and Liberty." The FMLN reportedly attacked La Laguna, Concepcion Quezaltepeque, La Palma, San Ignacio, San Miguel de Mercedes, and (El

In addition, Bautista claimed that he was hired by Matute during two meetings they held and that Matute offered to pay him $10,000 to kill somebody, presumably a contra commander who also intended to kill Matute.

Bautista said that a few days prior to the crime, Matute introduced to him another person, Cano Arteaga, who is still at large and who told Bautista that it was Ordonez who wanted the man dead.

Bautista said that, on the day of the crime, he met with Matute and Cano. They drove around the place several times until they intercepted the contra commander's car.

"I opened fire with a .38 caliber revolver. Aureliano got out of the car and was hit by Matute's shots. Cano finished him off."

Bautista said his two companions were armed with .45 caliber pistols. After the crime, they went their separate ways to wait to receive the promised money in a Tegucigalpa park on 15 February.

Police sources and Colonel Manuel Enrique Suarez, head of the Honduran Armed Forces' Public Relations Department, who presented the criminals to the reporters, declined to comment on the involvement of a Nicaraguan Embassy official in the crime.

Suarez said: "It is up to the Honduran Government to comment on this case or to try to establish whether a diplomat participated. The police have already done their duty."

There was nobody available at the Nicaraguan Embassy in Tegucigalpa to comment on the alledged involvement of one of the embassy officials in the assassination. The embassy would neither confirm nor deny that someone named Jose de Jesus Pena worked there.

Embassy Denies Involvement

PA0702173689 Tegucigalpa Cadena Audio Video in Spanish 1221 GMT 7 Feb 89

[Report by Renato Alvarez on interview with Juan Jose Membreno, Nicaraguan Embassy counselor; date and place not given—passages within quotation marks recorded]

[Text] [Alvarez] In the absence of Nicaraguan Ambassador Franciso Lacayo Parajon, Juan Jose Membreno, counselor to the Nicaraguan Embassy in Honduras, characterized as ridiculous, statements made yesterday by Luis Francisco Ordonez Reyes, who, according to police, is of Nicaraguan origin. Ordonez Reyes accused Jose Jesus Pena—alleged chief of security for the Nicaraguan Embassy in Tegucigalpa—of masterminding the 7 January assassination of contra commander Manuel Antonio Rugama.

[Membreno] "We categorically deny that allegation. These accusations against the embassy are ridiculous. The embassy has no officer or employee with the name of the man identified in the news conference. There have already been many accounts of this incident that point to the counterrevolution. We categorically deny these accusations and characterize them as ridiculous. We have no security officers at this embassy, only diplomatic and support personnel."

[Alvarez] All the personnel who work at the Nicaraguan Embassy in Tegucigalpa are appointed by the Foreign Ministry, according to the counselor.

[Membreno] "All our personnel are Nicaraguans. In regard to what he [Ordonez Reyes] has invented, we think it is ridiculous. We only have Nicaraguan Government personnel working at the embassy."

[Alvarez] Regarding the possibility that counterrevolutionary agents infiltrated the Nicaraguan Embassy in Tegucigalpa, Counselor Juan Jose Membreno replied:

[Membreno] "This happened at the ambassador's residence. The ambassador learned by chance that one of the residence guards was of Nicaraguan origin with alledged counterrevolutionary links. This is what happened. This case did not occur at the embassy."

[Alvarez] "Is Managua interested in eliminating all the contra leaders living in Honduras or all people who are linked to the counterrevolution?

[Membreno] "On the contrary, we respect peoples' lives and that is why we have always been willing to receive in Nicaragua all Nicaraguans who want to accept amnesty and all those who have in one way or other been involved in the counterrevolutionary campaign.

[Alvarez] "Have there been any more attacks against this embassy or any other type of threat, as occurred a few days ago?

[Membreno] "No, after the shooting incident at the ambassador's residence, what happened a few days later—here at the embassy—was that a car drove past the embassy at night and knocked down some security rails on the sidewalk."

Bomb Damages San Pedro Sula HONDUTEL

PA0702235089 Buenos Aires REUTER in Spanish 2252 GMT 7 Feb 89

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 7 Feb (REUTER)—A bomb blast damaged a telephone office today in the northern city of San Pedro Sula. A leftist group, which claimed responsibility for an attack on a U.S. military convoy last week, claimed responsibility for this attack.

Chique), all in Chalatenango, and inflicted 55 casualties on the enemy, 45 of which were inflicted on the 4th Infantry Brigade's Azmitia Battalion.

The station reports that on 30 January, guerrilla forces occupied Yamabal and Sensenbra in Morazan, where Military Detachment No 4's Cacaguatique Battalion troops fled in disarray. The station adds: "Another important action this week resulted in 20 casualties inflicted on the National Guard during a 29 January ambush on the Ilobasco-San Isidro Highway, Cabanas Department. In addition, clandestine militias ambushed 2d Infantry Brigade troops on the Santa Ana-San Salvador Freeway, near El Bejuco. This action resulted in nine government casualties, counting dead and wounded." The station reports in conclusion that the FMLN launched five ambushes this week "with the outstanding participation of clandestine militias."

Honduras

President Azcona Recognizes Paraguayan Government

PA0702184089 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2307 GMT 6 Feb 89

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 6 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—Honduran President Jose Azcona Hoyo today recognized the Paraguayan provisional government ruled since 3 February by General Andres Rodriguez following the overthrow of Alfredo Stroessner.

Referring to Stroessner, Azcona stated that "nobody has a right to govern a country for 34 years," and that, "inevitably, during such a long term of office, the people are subjected to arbitrary behavior and abuses."

The Honduran Government believes the violent overthrow of General Stroessner will benefit Latin American democracy in general, and Paraguay in particular.

Azcona said: "We have to wait and see how the situation develops, whether elections are held within 90 days, and whether the opposition is allowed to participate, as necessary steps for democracy in Paraguay."

After Stroessner's overthrow, Paraguayan Interior Minister Sabino Augusto Montanaro requested political asylum in the Honduran Embassy in Paraguay.

Azcona referred to that incident, stating that "perhaps he went there because it was the closest embassy available to Montanaro."

The president called a news conference today to report on his recent trip to Venezuela, where he traveled last week as a guest at the inauguration of the new Venezuelan president, Social Democrat Carlos Andres Perez.

Suspected Assassins of Contra Leader Meet Press

PA0702172589 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2252 GMT 6 Feb 89

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 6 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—The Honduran police today presented to reporters two of the presumed killers of contra commander Manuel Rugama Acevedo, alias "Aureliano." One of the men accused an official of the Nicaraguan Embassy in Tegucigalpa of involvement in the crime.

"Aureliano," considered to be the second in command of the Nicaraguan contras, was gunned down by an unidentified group in Tegucigalpa's northern outskirts on 7 January after attending a working meeting with other rebel leaders.

The police detained Hondurans Juan Bautista and Rigoberto Matute and Nicaraguan Luis Ordonez, who are being held as suspects in Aureliano's murder. Other suspects are still being pursued.

Only Bautista and Ordonez were presented to reporters. Matute is being held outside Tegucigalpa as a witness in the case.

Ordonez said he "participated only as a go-between" so Jose de Jesus Pena, the Nicaraguan Embassy official, could meet Matute, who worked as a messenger for Ordonez at the exchange office he runs in Tegucigalpa.

Ordonez added: "I was aware that Pena wanted to get rid of somebody, but I never learned who they were going to kill until 'Aureliano' was eliminated."

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Ordonez said further that he provided information on the contras several times to the Nicaraguan Embassy through Pena, who gave him $1,000 almost every month.

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PA0702173689 Tegucigalpa Cadena Audio Video in Spanish 1221 GMT 7 Feb 89

[Report by Renato Alvarez on interview with Juan Jose Membreno, Nicaraguan Embassy counselor; date and place not given—passages within quotation marks recorded]

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Bomb Damages San Pedro Sula HONDUTEL

PA0702235089 Buenos Aires REUTER in Spanish 2252 GMT 7 Feb 89

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 7 Feb (REUTER)—A bomb blast damaged a telephone office today in the northern city of San Pedro Sula. A leftist group, which claimed responsibility for an attack on a U.S. military convoy last week, claimed responsibility for this attack.

The bomb, made up of dynamite and a fuse, exploded just before dawn in the HONDUTEL [Honduran Telecommunications Enterprise] office in San Pedro Sula, 190 km north of this capital.

The explosion damaged furniture, four telephones, and shattered windows, but nobody was injured.

Leaflets found in the rubble stated that a leftist group was responsible both for the bomb as well as the attack on a U.S. military convoy last week in the Honduran northern mountain region.

Although no casualties were reported, one of the vehicles in the U.S. convoy was hit by two bullets. Until today nobody had claimed credit for that attack.

"The Jacobo Carcomo Command of the Morazanist Patriotic Front [FPM] attacked a U.S. convoy with M-16 riflefire," the leaflets read. Carcomo was a Honduran left-wing author at the beginning of the 20th century.

[Buenos Aires REUTER in Spanish at 0359 GMT on 8 February transmits a service message adding the following paragraphs to the original item:

The guerrillas claim to have inflicted an unspecified number of casualties on the U.S. troops during the attack, but that the United States is hiding that fact.

The guerrillas have also claimed responsibility for a bomb in a Chinese restaurant in Comayagua City in August 1988, where three U.S. soldiers were killed and three others wounded.

On that occasion, the U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa officially said that six U.S. soldiers had been wounded.] [end service message]

The FPM, named after a Central American leader of the last century, has claimed credit for several guerrilla attacks in the past.

Honduras has been gripped by a wave of violence this year, including the assassinations of a former Armed Forces commander, a commander of the anti-Sandinist rebels (supported by the United States), and a lawyer of an alleged drug trafficking tsar.

President Jose Azcona has called for national dialogue starting this week with the government, the opposition parties, labor unions, businessmen, and other groups to try to curb the sudden surge of violence.

Honduras, a close U.S. ally, has traditionally been a peaceful country in a region stricken by internal conflicts.

'Cinchoneros' Claims Bombing

PA0802024889 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0142 GMT 8 Feb 89

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 7 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—The Cinchonero Popular Liberation Movement, which on 25 January claimed responsibility for killing former Honduran Armed Forces chief General Gustavo Alvarez, claimed responsibility today for detonating a bomb at telephone company offices in San Pedro Sula, northern Honduras.

The bomb caused no casualties but destroyed at least six telephone booths, office equipment and material, walls, windows, and blinds in one of the administration offices of the Honduran Telecommunications Enterprise, (HONDUTEL).

Damage was estimated at $25,000 according to preliminary figures given by a HONDUTEL spokesman.

A "Cinchoneros" spokesman who called two radio stations did not give details of the attack, but said he would give more information later.

Police are investigating the killing of Alvarez on 25 January and today's attack in San Pedro Sula, 240 km north of Tegucigalpa.

Nicaragua

RN To Make Proposal to Sandinist Government

PA0802012489 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2357 GMT 7 Feb 89

[Text] Managua, 7 Feb, (ACAN-EFE)—The Nicaraguan Resistance (RN) Directorate will present a new proposal to the Sandinist Government to resume the peace negotiations interrupted in Managua last June, "contra" spokesmen announced today.

In New York on 8 February, an RN delegation will try to meet separately with the foreign ministers of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Costa Rica to announce the initiative and ask that it be relayed to the Sandinist Government, Wilfredo Montalvan, a principal leader of the organization, told ACAN-EFE.

Montalvan, who was contacted abroad by telephone from the Nicaraguan capital, said that the RN Directorate considers the new proposal "very flexible" and that "there will be no other option but to resume the war" if the Managua Government rejects it.

The Sandinists have not heeded the latest "contra" offers to resume negotiations, including some that had the support of Costa Rican President Oscar Arias.

Diplomatic sources in Managua told ACAN-EFE that Washington will not establish direct negotiations with the Sandinists if they do not first talk with the RN.

The "contra's" new initiative seeks to give "more strength" to the Verification Commission of the Sapoa agreements signed by the government and the RN on 23 March 1988 in Sapoa, near the Costa Rican border.

Montalvan explained that they want to give the commission the power to "denounce nonfulfillment," apply penalties, and receive funds from abroad to carry out its mission.

The Verification Commission is made up of Nicaraguan Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo, archbishop of Managua, and Brazilian Joao Baena Soares, OAS secretary general.

Also, the RN proposes a 120-day period from the signing of a new agreement with the Nicaraguan Government, for the parties in conflict to fulfill the democratization commitments in Nicaragua.

In that time, according to the RN Directorate proposal, a new national constituent assembly will be elected, a new constitution will be drafted, and a "transitional government" appointed.

The proposal establishes other schedules for the government to grant a total amnesty, unrestricted freedom of speech, and repeal "the repressive laws," Montalvan told ACAN-EFE.

The "contra" stated that the talks can be resumed at the OAS headquarters in Washington.

"Only if all the stipulations are met, the RN, whose troops are intact, will turn over their weapons and rejoin civilian life in Nicaragua," Montalvan added.

"Sooner or later, the Sandinists will be obliged to talk to the RN," Montalvan said, commenting on recent statements by Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega that the Sandinists "will not negotiate with the contras because they are a totally defeated force." Ortega labeled the "contras" a "corpse," but RN leaders and the U.S. Government claim that the rebel actions have been held up only by the lack of U.S. military support since 1 year ago, but are not demobilized.

Democratic Coordinating Board Election Conditions

PA0702234889 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1930 GMT 7 Feb 89

[Text] A DPA report datelined in Managua states that the Nicaraguan Democratic Coordinating Board, CDN, a conservative opposition group, today demanded that the FSLN step down or hold elections with international supervision.

CDN President Carlos Huembes Trejos said in a news conference that his organization does not favor abstaining from the elections, but it demands equal conditions to participate in the elections scheduled for November 1990.

The CDN is a political-business-labor bloc composed of more than 12 organizations. It ignores the U. S. support of the contras, yet it has demanded political openings from the Sandinist government for several years.

In 1984, the CDN did not participate in the general elections in which President Daniel Ortega and representatives to the Nicaraguan Legislative Assembly were elected. The CDN asserted that the political conditions for free elections did not exist.

The CDN has demanded that international organizations supervise the 1990 elections, and that the government allow 17 reforms to the Constitution—which was approved in 1985—particularly concerning the electoral law.

Huembes said the government should hold a referendum on the constitutional reforms demanded by the opposition. Huembes asserted that the government plan has not been accepted by the opposition.

Likewise, CDN Executive Secretary Roger Guevara Mena asserted that a political dialogue between the United States and Nicaragua is not necessary to settle our differences because the problem is an internal one. Guevara also said the presidential summit scheduled for San Salvador on Monday, 13 February, to discuss solutions to the Central American crisis would be positive if realistic agreements are achieved.

CDN Executive Secretary Roger Guevara also said the dialogue being proposed by the government should not only include leaders of the sectors involved. He said there should be a national dialogue, and added the CDN would be willing to enter a new phase of discussions with the government.

Panama

COLINA's Duque Gives Acceptance Speech

PA0702152889 Panama City Televisora Nacional in Spanish 2357 GMT 6 Feb 89

[Democratic Revolutionary Party Candidate Carlos Duque's acceptance speech on being confirmed presidential candidate for the National Liberation Coalition, COLINA, for the 7 May elections; from the New Panama Gymnasium on 6 Feb—recorded]

[Text] I want you to know that I will not let you down. Today is a big day of popular, civic, and political festivity. We combine here the happiness of carnival with the happiness of the triumph we will achieve on 7 May. [applause]

The revolutionary conscience of the Republic is represented here. A guarantee of victory is expressed here, because the PRD [Democratic Revolutionary Party] only knows how to win. This party was born to win all the battles and to consolidate the Torrijist revolution. It was born to channel the nationalist feelings of the Panamanian people. It was born to serve as the best instrument in the liberation and sovereignty struggle. These are the big issues at stake in the next elections. I want to be very clear and emphatic so that nobody will be mistaken. To the proposal that I head the COLINA presidential ticket, I respond without hesitation that I accept this responsibility. [applause]

I will go with you as far as you wish. [applause] We will ensure the country and the world that in Panama there is no going backward, that there is an ongoing, long-term revolutionary process at work. [crowd chants: "They are leaving; yes, they are.]

We must be clear about the profound significance of these elections. In the next 5 years, we will have to face basic problems that are part of the national sovereignty struggle. We are at the great historic crossroads it has taken us many years to reach. We arrived at these crossroads by overcoming the many obstacles that emerged on the road to our total national liberation.

The Torrijos - Carter treaties, inspired by the idea of giving new meaning to canal relations, are being openly violated by the United States. Law 9670 remains in effect as a symbol of disrespect for and noncompliance with international commitments. The irrational and overwhelming presence of U.S. occupation troops, without the permission of the Panamanian authorities, continues. All forms of intervention have been used in Panama's domestic affairs. We have been vilely and cruelly attacked . They have blocked all possibilities for international cooperation with many countries. They are illegally withholding the tax payments owed by U.S. companies. In an act of modern piracy, they have appropriated the Panamanian funds in U.S. banks, and—listen to this—they have permitted some Panamanian politicians to make use of these funds for their own benefit. [shouts]

They have paralyzed the various programs that were being carried out in support of the national government's initiatives to assist the masses. They have caused a significant slump in our economiy that has resulted in unemployment. They have done this to bring about a radical change in Panama's national goals. To this end, they put together an infamous and diabolical strategy against our country.

The important thing for them is to bend our will. What interests them is to have a government that will allow the treaties to be revised so the United States can stay here after 31 December 1999. That revisionist intention is being disguised by various means. Now some say we should revise the treaty to improve it, that Torrijos should have obtained much more to benefit Panama. I want to state clearly that they are not going to deceive us with these stories. The Torrijos - Carter treaties do not have to be revised at all. [applause, chants: "Duque, yes; Yankees, no"]

On 31 December 1999 they will leave. Then, our historic slogan will be realized: one single territory, one single flag. [crowd chants: "One single territory, one single flag."]

We are ready to discuss with the new U.S. Administration our current relations to arrive at a mutual understanding. We are inspired by a great desire for peace and a great sense of responsibility for our people.

Many friends insisted that Noriega be the presidential candidate. Various views were expressed to support that position. However, despite the fact that the COLINA parties could have nominated him in view of their respect for him, Gen Noriega declined this possibility. Actions such as this do credit to the general of dignity, Gen Manuel Antonio Noriega. An unselfish act of this nature is a valuable example of a public person whose conduct is guided more by a sense of duty than by the desire for honors. That is Gen Noriega. [applause]

The votes are not in the United States; the votes are not in any country; the votes are here. They should go and look for their vote. They should not go on their knees to beg through diplomatic channels, but go out and get their votes. But they know they are already lost. They are lost. The votes are in Chorrillo, Maranon, San Miguelito, Chupampa, Coclesito, Arraijan—not in the U.S. universities. Foreign remedies, be they of the South or North, will not help them defeat us in the elections. The votes, I repeat, are here in San Miguelito. It is indispensable that we point out we can resolve the economic problems. We have the ability and human elements necessary to confront the economic problems with Panamanian formulas. We must work together, with a great sense of faith and optimism in our future. It is a grave error to think everything is lost here and there is no way to overcome our problems and difficulties.

We must break away from the bonds of economic dependence, which is what they use to try to get us on our knees. It is therefore absolutely indispensable to diversify our economic relations with all the markets open to trade with us. There must be no doubt or timidity; we have to adopt an aggressive and dynamic attitude that befits a country with negotiating experience and with a great commercial tradition. To remain with a single market is suicidal. When the sense of dependence grows deeper, the traitors emerge, because they lose all perspective. They feel hemmed in and cornered; amid their desperation, they turn in their friends, their fellow party members, and the fatherland. We must give a firm and decisive response to the commercial activity that must generate more fruits. We must earnestly see to the legal

and administrative requisites of the human groups dedicated to commercial activities. They are our friends, and I salute them. [applause]

In my administration, we will launch the center port project. We must use the ports of Balboa and Cristobal more effectively. We must get more ships to dock in our ports to increase our national wealth. More ships mean more work. We will create the center port, which will be a source of more jobs. The center port will bring about the renewal of the railroad and the Panama - Colon freeway and will complement the zone, for the development and growth of Colon's free zone. We are certain Colon will be the most progressive province in the coming years.

Therefore, I believe in working conscientiously alongside the peasants to face their many needs. I believe in the union struggles and in the labor code, which are pillars of growth, welfare, and social peace in the country. [applause] I believe in good health care, which the inhuman aggression is mercilessly attacking, harming a people accustomed to having access to medical care. I believe in education and in the educators, but in education that prepares the child and youth technologically and patriotically. I believe in low-cost housing programs for the people to allow them to live in a dignified and decorous manner. I believe in the value of our professionals, who know how to place their knowledge at the service of national development, without egotism and without indifference to the pain of others and needs of the humble. I also believe the high government posts must be filled by the best, be they the sons of our working people. [applause]

My administration will require ability, honesty, and patriotism—especially patriotism, because the country is tired of having to deal with so many traitors. Our people can no longer tolerate any more traitors. [applause, cheers]

Allow me to recall that the accelerated process of integrating Panamanian woman to national responsibilities has begun. [applause] Some things have been achieved in that sense while others remain to be achieved. I solemnly vow Panamanian women will achieve lofty and outstanding participation in the government I will head with your help. [applause]

To the parties that compose COLINA, I reiterate the necessity of working together to achieve our final objective. Let there be no tripping up or disloyalties. We seek to achieve the perfecting of our Panamanian-style democracy with dignity and sovereignty. [applause] It is the democracy that permits the country the right to enjoy the fruits of its own resources. It is the democracy that gives the people direct participation in the political, economic, and social decisions that affect it. That democracy of ours obliges us to prepare for it, because when a country decides to carry out such a democratic project, the attacks follow. That is what happened to Omar, that is what happens to Noriega and to the people who are suffering the crime of the aggression in their own flesh.

Fellow members of the glorious PRD, Omar wanted us to pick up the flag, and we have. [applause] I appreciate the confidence placed in me; I will not surrender or betray anyone. [applause] I want a pure and clean electoral campaign, respectful and gentlemanly, without insults or slander, but I also want there to be strict abiding by the truth. Let them not come out with the story of fraud to justify their defeat. The PRD is enormous. [applause] The PRD is enormous, and if we add up the COLINA parties, I assure you our adversaries will be buried by a mountain of votes. The party banner will be our inspiration and guide. I vow to take it from township to township with honor and pride. That is the flag of victory; that is the flag we will take without taking one step backward. [crowd chants: "Not one step backward!] Long live the Panamanian woman! [crowd shouts: "Viva!"] Long live the Panamanian youth! [crowd shouts: "Viva!"] Long live the PRD! [crowd shouts: "Viva!"] Thank you very much. Long live COLINA! [crowd shouts: "Viva!"]

Argentina

Vice President Discusses Security Law

PY0702142889 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1139 GMT 7 Feb 89

[Text] Buenos Aires, 7 Feb (TELAM)—Vice President Victor Martinez has said that the Armed Forces "must participate" in internal security, and added that the government is considering the creation of "the institutions required for that security, through a decree or a law."

Martinez made this statement in Government House after meeting with President Raul Alfonsin with whom he discussed the possibility of authorizing the Armed Forces to participate in intelligence activities and internal repressions in case of subversive attacks.

Martinez said that Article No 4 of the National Defense Law has left pending the issuance of a Security Law, and now the government is studying the possibility of creating the institutions in which "the Armed Forces would, of course, participate."

When asked if such a law would be discussed in a special session of Congress, the vice president answered, yes.

Changes in Foreign Exchange Policy Outlined

PY0702011889 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1855 GMT 6 Feb 89

[Text] Buenos Aires, 6 Feb (NA)—In an effort to prop up its current economic plan, the government today modified its foreign exchange policy to offset the increased uncertainty created in recent days by a strong demand for dollars and a noticeable increase in interest rates.

As of tomorrow, following today's bank holiday, the Central Bank will suspend the auction of dollars and the free market will be allowed to depend exclusively on the forces of supply and demand.

In turn, foreign trade operations will be conducted at a commercial exchange rate to be set by the government and a special exchange rate 25 percent higher than the commercial rate.

For the commercial dollar market, the austral will be devalued by a total of 6 percent in February. This morning the austral was initially devalued by 2.5 percent, thus establishing an exchange rate of 14.11 australes to the dollar for sales. Consequently, the special dollar exchange rate will be 18.01 australes to the dollar.

The current public utility rate and price policy will be maintained, and export incentives will be continued.

In an official communique, the Economy Ministry enumerated the "positive" results of the Spring Plan and pointed out that the plan is being affected "by circumstances, some of them of a political character, which increased the uncertainty and disturbed the operation of the markets in the short term." It added that "the uncertainty was further increased by distorted and self-serving reports on the status of negotiations with governments of creditor countries, multilateral organizations, and private creditor banks."

In sum, these are the modifications to the foreign exchange policy that become effective today:

A) The Central Bank will suspend the auction of dollars in the free market.

B) Foreign exchange operations will be conducted at the official foreign exchange market and at the free foreign exchange market.

Official foreign exchange market: The operations listed below will be transacted in this market at the specified exchange rates:

1) Commercial exchange rate: Export operations that have been handled through the official exchange rate market up to now.

2) Special exchange rate: Export operations that have been transacted through the free exchange rate market up to now; import operations that will be transacted as of today, and import operations that have been contracted previously.

The commercial foreign exchange rate will be readjusted gradually up to 6 percent in February. On Tuesday, 7 February, an initial readjustment of 2.5 percent will go into effect.

The special foreign exchange rate will be 25 percent higher than the commercial rate.

Free foreign exchange market: All other transactions will be handled through this market where the rate of exchange will be set by the forces of supply and demand. The Central Bank will not interfere in this market.

C) The export incentive policy will be continued, gradually transferring the foreign exchange now converted through the commercial market to the special dollar market and the free dollar market for conversion. To this effect, beginning in March, 10 percentage points of export dollars now converted through the commercial exchange rate market will be converted at the special dollar exchange rate and at the free market exchange rate in equal parts. Similar transfers will be made in subsequent months.

The price policy will continue to be oriented, as it now is, toward decreasing inflation.

During February, 6 percent will be the maximum readjustment to be authorized both for the commercial dollar exchange rate and for the public utility rates.

The rule now in force will again be applied for public utility rate increases in March, that is, less than 0.5 percent. The price overseeing committee will set higher readjustment rates for any exceptions.

National Senator Francisco Gil Dies
PY0602175989 Buenos Aires Domestic Service in Spanish 1500 GMT 6 Feb 89

[Summary] National Senator Francisco Gil of San Juan died today from a lung illness.

Chile

Government Opposes Boycott on Falklands Ferry
PY0702121289 Santiago LA TERCERA DE LA HORA in Spanish 25 Jan 89 p 11

[Text] Yesterday, Foreign Minister Hernan Felipe Errazuriz said that our country has always been opposed to any boycott in reference to the problem involving the "Indiana I." This is the ship that has begun an irregular schedule between the Malvinas, Montevideo, and Punta Arenas. He said that "we believe that trade should not be used as a political instrument."

Errazuriz emphasized, however, that this position does not change the firm Chilean position in support of Argentina in the search of a peaceful and negotiated solution with Great Britain over the Malvinas Islands conflict.

Errazuriz said that "we have the right to use our resources as we see fit and as a sovereign nation this is what we will do in the name of all Chileans."

The ship "Indiana I" began operations between Port Stanley, Montevideo, and Punta Arenas this month. It ran into problems in Montevideo and in Chile where political and maritime union organizations tried to impose a boycott on the normal operation of the ship. This action was in support of the Argentine position over the conflict with Great Britian regarding the Falklands, or Malvinas Islands.

PCCh on Political Prisoners, Opposition
PY0702025289 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 27 Jan 89 p C-2

[Text] The outlawed PCCh has reported that yesterday they demanded that the oposition agree to "release all political prisoners and those who have been banished to other parts of the country, and nullify all trials conducted without the appropriate guarantees, if any of these irregularities still exist when the democratic government is elected."

The PCCh members said: "The opposition forces are getting ready to stage a political and mass fight to defeat the dictatorship this year and to establish a democratic government and a constituent parliament in the country."

Communist Leaders Americo Zorrilla, Mireya Baltra, Guillermo Scherping, and Jose Sanfuentes held a news conference to express their thanks for the expressions of solidarity they received during their days in jail. The leaders also commented on their sentences for allegedly supporting violence.

Asked about the PCCh congress currently being held, Zorrilla said the congress is continuing its debates, and that their imprisonment has strengthened the resolve of the congress, which will have a successful culmination.

The outlawed PCCh has no special preference for any presidential candidate, but will support the candidate who proves most capable of interpreting the people's will.

Sanfuentes said: "We have no special preference for any candidate, but we hope to discuss, as the United Left is doing, the issues the democratic government will have to implement. The candidate will naturally appear among those who prove to be most capable of interpreting the people's will and reflecting the consensus of the entire opposition."

Vicariate's Msgr Valech Criticizes Demonstrators
PY0702000189 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 2200 GMT 6 Feb 89

[Text] Msgr Sergio Valech, head of the Vicariate of Solidarity, has repudiated acts of violence committed by groups of demonstrators in front of the Vicariate offices.

According to a report released in the last few hours, political activists have staged lightning demonstrations at the Plaza de Armas in Santiago. The demonstrators shouted slogans supporting the Vicariate of Solidarity in its fight against the courts' decision to confiscate the Chiloe Clinic medical files related to terrorist activities currently under investigation.

The demonstrators clashed with Carabineros who were attempting to preserve order at the Plaza de Armas.

Msgr Valech said: Those who are throwing stones and creating riots cannot be considered friends of the Vicariate of Solidarity.

The leftist leader of the Christian Democratic Party, Benitez Sandoval, was among those detained by the police during the demonstrations.

New Social Democratic Executive Board Named

PY0602235389 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 21 Jan 89 p C-4

[Summary] The Social Democratic Party temporary executive board is comprised of Luis Alfredo Pacheco River as chairperson, Maria Avila Galindo as deputy chairperson, Jaime Carmona Donoso as treasurer, and Clara Salinas Illegas as secretary general.

The president of the party supreme court will be Juan Carlos Cardenas, and Maria Janet Bustos will be the vice president.

Colombia

Accord To Study Conflicts With Colombia Signed

PA0502183089 Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0000 GMT 4 Feb 89

[Report by special correspondent Diana Sofia Giraldo from Caracas—passages within quoatation marks recorded]

[Text] Today in Caracas, Colombia and Venezuela broke the silence that has characterized their relations lately. As was predicted after the election of Carlos Andres Perez, who began his presidential term yesterday, it is likely that the border problems with Colombia, including the one of the Gulf [of Venezuela], will have short-, medium-, and long-term solutions.

Colombian President Virgilio Barco and Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez today signed an agreement to form commissions to study and assess the conflicts between their nations. The Colombian and Venezuelan presidents agreed to resume talks and to form a reconciliation commission, whose formation was included in the 1939 treaty on the border conflict.

In a drastic change in Venezuelan foreign policy, President Perez decided to form the reconciliation commission, which was rejected by his predecessor, Jaime Lusinchi. Perez decided to resume the dialogue and recognize the 1939 treaty. The two countries signed a legal document that will allow them to solve the problem of the Gulf and other pending issues.

During his return trip, President Barco provided details of the agreement:

[Barco] "We agreed to make efforts to form the reconciliation commission established by the Treaty of Nonaggression, Reconciliation, and Judicial Settlement and Arbitration, which was signed 50 years ago."

The dialogue between the two countries began cautiously 2 months ago. Today the two countries agreed to appoint two high commissioners who in 6 months will present an assessment of the conflicts between Colombia and Venezuela. The high commissioners will propose a way to seek solutions to these general conflicts. At the same time, other commissions will focus on the border problems.

[Colombian Ambassador to Venezuela Pedro Gomez] "The two presidents also agreed to form national commissions to study all matters related to the social and economic problems of the border areas."

[Venezuelan Foreign Minister Enrique Tejero] "One of the objectives of these talks is to stop focusing on the Gulf issue during the talks."

Former Colombian President Turbay Ayala praised the resumption of the dialogue between the two countries.

[Turbay] "President Perez's government has decided that any means contributing to peaceful solutions, reconciliation, and detente are better than any other methods."

Presidential Aide on Agreement With M-19

PA0602025389 Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0158 GMT 6 Feb 89

["Last-minute" report on interview with presidential adviser Rafael Pardo Rueda by unidentified reporter on "the agreement reached" between Pardo and M-19 leader Carlos Pizarro Leongomez; date and place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Unidentified reporter] Mr Pardo, what was the most important thing about the meeting with the M-19 leaders?

[Pardo] We reached considerable progress concerning the 10 January meeting. We established procedures to seek the participation of other sectors in the process for a direct dialogue between the government, political parties, and guerrilla groups.

[Reporter] What is next in the peace process?

[Pardo] Certain mechanisms have been established for a direct dialogue, and other mechanisms will allow the participation of other political parties. They will also strengthen the possibilities for a direct dialogue between the government and the guerrilla groups. Also, the M-19 has agreed to appoint several people who are not outside the law as spokesmen of the organization and to give more dynamism to the process from now on.

[Reporter] There is a trial against the M-19 for the attack on the Justice Palace. Do you think this will affect the talks?

[Pardo] No, because there has been no pledge concerning the M-19 members' juridical status. People who are not outside the law or who have no legal case pending will be chosen as representatives. We will accept no one who is outside the law.

[Reporter] Did you discuss the participation of other guerrilla groups' in the dialogue during this meeting? [Words indistinct] that the dialogue should include all the groups that compose the Simon Bolivar Guerrilla Coordinating Board and not only one of the groups.

[Pardo] The government is willing to talk with all the groups up in arms, provided they comply with the established conditions. We do not want to exclude anyone, but we must establish certain conditions to prove their credibility. This would allow more credibility in case of a dialogue with other groups up in arms. The country must feel certain the dialogue will seek the same goal: peace for all.

[Reporter] The document talks about mechanisms for the participation of other sectors. How will this participation really take place?

[Pardo] We talked about the need to establish those mechanisms, but the political parties that specifically supported the appeal sent to the government and the M-19 must define those mechanisms.

[Reporter] What is the M-19's attitude concerning the government's invitation to all political parties and the letter sent by former Presidents Andres Pastrana and Julio Cesar Turbay Ayala to the Patriotic Union?

[Pardo] It is considered an important step that will allow the other political parties' participation.

Police Rescue U.S. Citizen, Businessman

PA0802012589 Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0030 GMT 8 Feb 89

[Text] Colombian industrialist Normal Echevarria and U.S. businessman Michael Reyff, kidnapped 11 days ago in Medellin, were rescued today. The police operation took place on the outskirts of Antioquia Department's capital. No ransom was paid. Two of the kidnappers were killed, but the others managed to escape. Nevertheless, there is evidence that could lead to their arrest.

[Begin recording] [Reporter] Colonel Otalora, assistant commander of the Medellin Metropolitan Police, how were Normal Echevarria and U.S. citizen Michael Reyff rescued?

[Otalora] At 1700, Medellin Metropolitan Police members were able to rescue Normal Echevarria and Michael Reyff; they are safe and sound. Once again we thank the people for their timely cooperation. [Words indistinct] local businessmen lent us their helicopters to search for and arrest the kidnappers. Unfortunately it quickly became dark and we could not locate the kidnappers. However, we have identified them and hope to arrest them in a few hours.

[Reporter] What is the condition of the two hostages?

[Otalra] Normal Echevarria is perfectly all right. He will probably meet with you in a few minutes. He is very happy to see his family. We are pleased with the positive results of this operation, and the National Police feel proud. The people of Antioquia have been brought closer to their police.

[Reporter] Was it necessary to pay a ransom? Had the family been asked to pay a ransom?

[Otalora] No, no ransom was paid. Mr Echevarria will tell you that later. They are perfectly safe and sound.

[Reporter] Where were they kept? Can you describe it?

[Otalora] No, I cannot give you details right now. We will probably issue that information later. [end recording]

Paraguay

Rodriguez on Upcoming Elections, Other Issues

PY0702141689 Asuncion HOY in Spanish 7 Feb 89 pp 8, 9

[Report on press conference by President Andres Rodriguez with unidentified reporters at Government House on 6 February]

[Excerpts] [Rodriguez] Well, gentlemen, I am very glad to have this opportunity to talk with you. I seldom have the opportunity. I am glad that through you I will be able to tell the world of some of my ideas and feelings, which might be of interest to all of us, and also to several countries. Consequently, those countries will have their questions answered through you. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] What are the prospects for the relations with Chile?

[Rodriguez] I assure you that during its term in office, my government will respect all accords signed by previous administrations with friendly countries.

[Reporter] Why is the Communist Party excluded from the upcoming elections?

[Rodriguez] Because of the terms of the Constitution.

[Reporter] Is your government anti-Communist?

[Rodriguez] Yes, sir.

[Reporter] Will you run in the upcoming elections?

[Rodriguez] I may or I may not. The decision on the presidential candidate must be made by the ruling Colorado Party.

[Reporter] When will the elections be held?

[Rodriguez] Within 90 days. I believe that the political parties will begin to reorganize themselves and each one will sponsor its own candidate.

[Reporter] Do you consider the Colorado Party as the favorite in the elections?

[Rodriguez] You know very well that the Colorado Party is the majority party in our country.

[Reporter] Mr President, if non-recognized parties meet the necessary requirements, will they be allowed to participate in the elections?

[Rodriguez] All political parties will participate in the amendment of the electoral law. They will make the decisions, but the parties that have met the requirements will participate in free elections.

[Reporter] What are the foreign policy guidelines that will be adopted by your government?

[Rodriguez] The same guidelines that have been thus far followed. I believe that such guidelines must remain unchanged.

[Reporter] Has the U.S. Government recognized your government?

[Rodriguez] We are not concerned about that, because we are perfectly well aware of the friendly relations that exist between us. We believe that we have designed the best possible policy. Perhaps we have not received news from the United States for a short time. We have had a week, with a public holiday, and then the weekend. That may be the reason.

[Reporter] Fraud has always been reported in previous elections. What is your government's position on the subject?

[Rodriguez] I can assure you that under no circumstances will there be fraud. It is not necessary to commit any fraud here. I am sure that the elections will be observed by overseers and by people who will be invited from the most democratic countries. [passage omitted]

In this part of the interview, the president was consulted about the free transit between Puerto President Stroessner and Foz de "Iguazu, and about the illegal commercial practices. In this regard, the president said:

[Rodriguez] I believe that borders should not separate neighbors. I believe borders should unite and promote brotherhood, cooperation, and harmony.

[Reporter] What is the situation of political parties in view of the upcoming elections?

[Rodriguez] I believe that all the political parties are quite organized. There were general elections less than 1 year ago. Therefore, parties should still have their plans, and with the new decisions I believe they will speed up their work and improve their organization.

[Reporter] Mr President, why has an official figure not yet been released on the number of dead in the military confrontation?

[Rodriguez] The truth is that I do not yet have a detailed report, but I can assure you that there are no more than 50 dead and injured.

[Reporter] Will membership with the Colorado Party remain a precondition for holding a high-level government post or for joining the Armed Forces?

[Rodriguez] This subject will be analyzed in keeping with the Constitution and the law.

[Reporter] After participating in the previous government, why did you decide to end the 34-year old regime?

[Rodriguez] I was only a soldier who fulfilled orders. The time may have arrived for this soldier to rebel.

[Reporter] And why did he rebel?

[Rodriguez] Well, there must have been reasons for it...

[Reporter] And what are those reasons?

[Rodriguez] Well...please excuse me. Everyone is aware of them.

[Reporter] What is the current status of the relations between the Stroessner family and your family?

[Rodriguez] Relations are fine, my family has nothing to do with all this, just like the family of President Stroessner has nothing to do with it either. The government of President Stroessner is totally independent from family ties. My family and I are happy to be able to offer at least our sympathy.

[Reporter] Did you say good-bye to Stroessner at the airport?

[Rodriguez] I did not personally say good-bye to him. He was a bit far away.

[Reporter] And his daughter?

[Rodriguez] Yes sir. [passage omitted]

President Rodriguez reiterated to the journalists that "I am sure that through you we will strengthen the spirit of cordiality that should exist among all friendly nations. Thank you, very much."

Comments on Former Officials

PY0802140489 Asuncion Radio Primero de Marzo in Spanish 1305 GMT 8 Feb 89

[Interview held by President Andres Rodriguez with Paraguayan Industrial Union reporters and with a Venezuelan television crew at Government House; date not given —recorded]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] President Andres Rodriguez spoke with a Venezuelan television crew. We also recorded the president's remarks.

[Rodriguez in progress]...your presence here on this occasion in my office and through you I wish to express my best (?wishes) for the strengthening even more of the friendship between the Venezuelan and Paraguayan peoples.

The intentions of this new government have been disseminated thoroughly by the media and they are now known by everyone. [passage omitted]

[Rodriguez] And, I wish to send greetings to your new president, because he has (?just assumed power) and because I also am called Andres. I hope he has a happy tenure and I wish him success always. I express my best wishes for the happiness of the Venezuelan people. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] What will happen to the high-ranking officials of the previous government who are currently prisoners or abroad?

[Rodriguez] Well, there are very few of them abroad. The courts will handle their cases, which is how it should be.

Thus we respect the Constitution and the law. As I have just told you, above everything we respect human rights.

[Reporter] Finally, a message for the Venezuelan people.

[Rodriguez] A very warm embrace for the Venezuelan people.

[Reporter] Thank you.

Foreign Minister on Integration, Drug Trafficking

PY0802141089 Asuncion ULTIMA HORA in Spanish 7 Feb 89 p 11

[Excerpt] Yesterday when Foreign Minister Luis Maria Argana assumed his new job in the presence of high officials of the Foreign Ministry, he said that "circumstances have lead me to this job. I frankly admit that I have no experience or professionalism, however, I am moved by a profound patriotism and by a great desire to do things well for my country."

Argana added that he is also moved "by a profound desire to make Paraguayan relations with the world more useful and fraternal, and especially to make Latin American integration a reality for the benefit of our people, for their development and well-being."

Argana also said that "regarding international law, this government will assert in international meetings that drug trafficking should be declared an international crime just as piracy was declared in the past. We will say this to prevent traffickers from taking refuge anywhere in the world."

Argana added: "The government of General Andres Rodriguez basically wants to achieve a real democracy in Paraguay. I believe this will be possible because he has received great sympathy and because a real feeling of national reconciliation has been evident in all the acts held by the new government. National reconciliation is essential to achieve democracy, but enthusiasm and self-denial are necessary considering the special situation we are experiencing. The success of this administration depends on that." [passage omitted]

Colorado Party 'Militants' Reportedly Detained

PY0802033989 Asuncion ULTIMA HORA in Spanish 7 Feb 89 p 9

[Text] It has been reported that two other Colorado Party "militants" have been detained and taken to the cavalry barracks, where they are being held now. They are Carlos Antonio Ortiz Ramirez, the former education minister, and Gustavo Doria Centurion, who this morning tendered his resignation from the post of secretary general fo the Agriculture and Livestock Ministry. Doria Centurion was taken from the Agriculture and Livestock Ministry directly to the cavalry.

Other detentions continue to be made. It is impossible to report them quickly, however, because no official reports are available on these operations.

Ortiz Ramirez, who was spending his summer holidays in San Bernardino, was taken to the Campo Grande cavalry barracks during the past few hours.

[Radio Nacional Direct] Alejandro Caceres Almada and [General Post Office Director] Manuel Modesto Esquivel have not been located yet. It is presumed that they fled to Argentina.

Political Parties Say Elections Too Soon

Christian Democrats React

PY0802015189 Asuncion EL DIARIO in Spanish 7 Feb 89 p 9

[Text] The Christian Democratic Party [PDC] yesterday released a note urging the social and political organizations to express their dissatisfaction over the government decision to hold elections in 90 days. The new president of the Republic has signed a decree summoning the citizens for the elections in 90 days.

The note stated: "It is obvious that this coup, which ended the regime of the corrupt Alfredo Stroessner, has also ended the enforcement of the 1967 Constitution. This Constitution, which established a merely formal democratic legality, was in reality the dictatorship's Magna Carta."

"To pretend to have to comply with this dictatorial formality," the note continues, "is simply a way of going back to the past. The government, whose announced intention of starting a transition to true democracy, in which all political parties will receive and equal treatment without any discrimination, has been supported by the majority of the people from the very moment it took the power. It should not run the risk of losing prestige by repeating past mistakes."

"If the government decides to hold elections in 90 days without changing the legal structure and the electoral apparatus created by the dictatorship, only the candidates of the ruling Colorado Party, which was in the hands of the militant faction and is now again in the hands of the traditionalist faction, will have the opportunity of winning a high percentage of votes. These votes, however, will not express the current real electoral power in the country," the PDC note stated.

In view of these facts, the PDC believes it is inappropriate to hold elections in 90 days, as temporary President General Andres Rodriguez decided, because the opposition parties, which are subdivided into several factions, will have no time to organize a firm structure to support a strong candidate.

Opposition Seeks More Time

PY0702153889 Asuncion EL DIARIO in Spanish 7 Feb 89 special supplement p 11

[Text] The statement made by General Andres Rodriguez administration that general elections for president of the Republic will be held on 1 May has prompted all the opposition political parties to hold special sessions to decide on their position for the new elections.

Last night the Authentic Radical Liberal Party PLRA, presided over by Domingo Laino, summoned its leadership to a special assembly.

During the briefing session before the assembly, the PLRA grass roots leaders, and members from the interior, were informed that the rally being organized by the National Accord for 11 February in the Plaza Italia will occur without fail.

The National Accord will again notify the Interior Ministry through the Febrerista Revolutionary Party, of its intention to hold a rally to commemorate the 1987 electoral fraud.

After the briefing session with the grass roots leaders from the interior, the PLRA leadership held a private assembly to discuss the upcoming 1 May elections called by the provisional president. By midnight the PLRA leadership decided to request an extension before the elections, based on what the provisional president had said. President Rodriguez has said that all parties would enjoy equal oportunities, without privileges for anyone, for a real democracy and not an apprent one. Laino reported that decision of the PLRA to the media. He added that he would also inform the National Accord of the PLRA decision so that they can adopt a common position.

Church Official Says 'Hope for Change'

PY0702151589 Asuncion EL DIARIO in Spanish 7 Feb 89 special supplement pp 6, 7

[Text] Yesterday, Asuncion Archbishop Ismael Rolon said that the church does not support any political system. He added, however, that there is hope for change and improvement in the country following the coup, headed by General Andres Rodriguez, that ousted General Alfredo Stroessner.

Church leaders referred to the recent events that lead to the ouster of the Stroessner regime, and defined the position of the church on how to achieve national reconciliation.

The church position was explained during a news conference headed by Msgr Rolon with the participation of Msgr Jorge Liviers Banks, secretary general of the Paraguayan Episcopal Conference, and Bishops Mario Melanio Medina of Banjamin Aceval, and Anibal Maricevich of Concepcion. All of them answered questions from national and foreign reporters on various national political issues.

Msgr Livieres Banks said: "We have always said that the church wants to be with the people, it wants to share their problems and it wants to provide its own pastoral work for common good. We are here now to share with you the situation created by the recent events."

He emphasized the invariable position of the church in favor of reconciliation, that peace be the result of justice and love as well as fraternal and civilized coexistence. He added: We believe that the documents issued by the church for achieving these objectives should be emphasized again.

Msgr Rolon said that the military uprising was necessary after a long period which was like a bad dream. He said: "We justify the uprising as something that had to happen."

A foreign reporter said that General Rodriguez had stated that the previous elections won by Stroessner were clean and democratic. The reporter added that that statement means that it will take congress to install democracy in the country. Msgr Livieres answered:

"We believe that it is very important to reiterate the thoughts of the church, which called for national dialogue some 3 years ago. We believe that it is important to be realistic and to look to the future.

We do not believe that making accusations, or that condemning or praising will lead anywhere at this time. History will do that." He added that past experiences should be kept in mind, however, to prevent a repetition of past mistakes.

When an Argentine reporter asked Msgr Rolon if the church supports the government of Gen Rodriguez, Rolon said: "Support, no. The church does not support any political system. We have hope that there will be some change, some improvement. Support has never been given to any government because the church is independent, it teaches the gospel no matter the circumstances."

Rolon added that the first proclamations, and the declarations of the new government responded to the expectations of the people as well as to the principles and ideals of the church.

Rolon said: "We are interested in what will happen from now on. The promise made by this man (Gen Rordriguez) is that there will be an authentic democracy and we are very happy about it."

Msgr Maricevich said that the church will not compromise in the struggle against immorality and the defense of human rights. He added: "As we have previously done in the face of certain situations, we will make demands in the name of common good."

In answer to a question if he believes Rodriguez would continue in the government for several decades like Stroessner, Msgr Maricevich said that there is great confidence among the people. He said: "I believe that it will not be so easy to deceive the people as in the past. I believe that from now on nobody will deceive the people so easily. Our people are showing a great deal of common sense and they are firm. I believe that during this long period the people have matured a great deal, there is much more awareness among the youth and the peasants."

PRF Proposes 'Democratization of Country'

PY0802002789 Asuncion EL DIARIO in Spanish 7 Feb 89 special supplement p 10

[Text] The Febrerista Revolutionary Party [PRF] yesterday released a note commenting on Stroessner's ousting and on the installation of General Andres Rodriguez as president of the Republic. In the note, the PRF proposes the democratization of the country.

The PRF believes that to do that, it is necessary to "dismantle the previous regime's repressive apparatus, and to derogate laws that stifle freedom so that the Paraguayans can feel really free and have the right to perform their civic duties."

The note also states that the current electoral law must be modified with the help of all political organizations and that a free, sovereign Constitutional Assembly must be convened. All Paraguayan sectors must take part in this assembly, which will offer the country a new constitutional order, the note adds.

"A legitimate state and a true democracy cannot exist without these requirements," the note continues.

"To achieve these objectives, we will have to hold broad talks with all social and political sectors, including the church. The current temporary government, which will become a transition government, must also play an active part in these talks, which must establish the necessary conditions for a fluid and fruitful exchange of ideas and intentions. Only then will the government, political parties, and social organizations become part of this longed-for democracy," the note concludes.

The note contains an opening remark that the Armed Forces ousted the dictator in February, the same month in which the PRF celebrated the glorious revolution of 17 February 1936.

Radical Liberal Party Issues Communique

PY0702212389 Asuncion PATRIA in Spanish 7 Feb 89 p 7

["Declaration of the Radical Liberal Party"]

[Text] Asuncion, 3 February 1989

In view of today's military uprising and in keeping with the motives and goals mentioned in a proclamation issued by the commander in chief of the I Army Corps, Division General Andres Rodriguez, and

Considering:

That the country's effective democratization that has been announced is a long-cherished aspiration of the entire citizenry;

That the assurances given that human rights will be respected prompts a new optimism for the redemption of the Paraguayan people;

That the announced intentions to observe the National Constitution constitute basic precondition for an effective and genuine state of law in our fatherland;

That the respect for the religious feelings of the Paraguayan people has been continuously demanded by all civic sectors;

That, as a participant in Paraguayan civic life, the Radical Liberal Party [PLR] asserts its inalienable right to participate in the country's political life, without a resentful spirit, but with rights equal to those of the other political parties;

In view of all this we hereby express:

Our euphoria at the overthrow of the long and bloody dictatorship that has been devastating our nation;

Our hope for the promised institutionalization of the Armed Forces;

Our hopeful expectation of better days for our beloved Paraguay, in liberty, equality, and fraternity.

The Radical Liberal Party hereby commits itself to the nation to resolutely conduct actions for civic rights, social justice, peace based on equality, and coexistence among differing groups, and respect for the people's sovereignty.
[Signed] Dr Ramon Lezcano Torres, PLR president
Notary Public Osvaldo Vazquez, PLR secretary general

Supreme Court Officials Offer To Resign

PY0802033089 Asuncion ULTIMA HORA in Spanish 7 Feb 89 p 48

[Excerpts] Justice and Labor Minister Alexis Frutos Vaesken has told ULTIMA HORA that "I received a note from Supreme Court President Hiran Delgado von Leppel. The note is addressed to the president of the Republic. In the note, I believe, he is placing his post at the disposal of the Executive Branch." [passage omitted]

It was also learned that, in a note delivered to the justice and labor minister, the other Supreme Court—members Justo Pucheta Ortega, Luis Fernando Sosa Centurion, Francisco Pusineri Oddone, and Carlos Baez Renhfeld—also placed their posts at the disposal of the Executive Branch.

It has been reported that, despite this situation, court activities are normal. Concerning lower court judges and appellate court members, it has been reported that they would not be removed "en masse."

New Colorado Party Executive Board Named

PY0702232189 Asuncion Radio Primero de Marzo in Spanish 2139 GMT 7 Feb 89

[Excerpts] The names of the Colorado Party members who make up the temporary Executive Board in charge of Restoring the Colorado Party Executive Board have just been announced. The list consists of the following 33 names:

President: Juan Ramon Chavez; First Vice President: Luis Maria Argana; Second Vice President: Edgar L. Insfran; Third Vice President: Blan N. Riquelme; Secretaries: Juan Roque Galeano, Eugenio Sanabria Cantero, and Persio Da Silva; Treasurer: Juan Esteche Fanego; Deputy Treasurer: Federico Zayas; Members of the board committee: Pedro Hugo Pena, Ruben Stanley, Juan Manuel Frutos, Juan Cano Melgarejo, Dionisio Gonzalez Torres, Carlos A. Saldivar, Roque J. Avila, Alberto Noguet, Juan Manuel Frutos [as heard], Agustin Gonzalez Insfran, Julio Cesar Frutos, Marina Aquino de Ortiz, Ramon Centurion Nunez, Angel Roberto Seifart, Jose V. Ovelar, Arsenio Basualdo, Martin Palumbo, Atilio R. Fernandez, Eladio Cabral, Carlos Maria Ocampos, Eulogio Gonzalez, Juan B. Caballero, Genaro Sanchez, Carlos Romero Pereira, Hipolito Mendoza, Juan B. Ibanez, and Samuel Ramirez. [passage omitted].

The elections at the Asuncion Colorado Party precincts will be held on 12 March 1989, and the elections in the interior of the country will be held on 19 March. The special National Colorado Party meeting will be held on 1 and 2 April 1989. At that time, the party will elect its presidential candidate. [passage omitted]

Foreign Ministry Officials Appointed

PY0802231489 Asuncion EL DIARIO in Spanish 7 Feb 89 special supplement p 5

[Summary] Attorney Hugo Saguier Caballero has been appointed Foreign Ministry under secretary.

Yesterday Mr Raul Morel was appointed private secretary of the foreign minister. Morel replaces Miss Isabel Britos.

Military Command Reshuffled, Appointees Named

PY0702180789 Asuncion Domestic Service in Spanish 1530 GMT 7 Feb 89

[Relay from the Undersecretariat for Information of the President—recorded]

The president of the nation, and commander in chief of the Armed Forces, today signed Decree No 12 appointing several generals and other high-ranking officers to various positions within the Armed Forces. The decree states:

Whereas the commander in chief of the Armed Forces of the nation has submitted Note No 15 dated 7 February 1989 to the Ministry of National Defense requesting the appointment of several general and other high-ranking officers to various positions within the Armed Forces in keeping with the provisions of Article 52, Paragraphs A and D of Law No 847 dated December 19, 1980.

The provisional president of the Republic of Paraguay decrees:

Article 1 The following generals and other high-ranking officers of the Armed Forces are appointed to the positions listed below:

Brigadier General Abraham Abed as acting commander of Military Training Institutes, replacing Division General Gerardo Alberto Johansenn Roux.

Brigadier General Ricardo Bogado Silva as acting commander of the II Corps, replacing Brigadier Luis Rolando Tomassone.

Brigadier General Eumelio Bernal Gimenez as acting Armed Forces chief of staff, replacing Division General Alejandro Fretes Davalos.

Brigadier General Ramon Humberto Garcete as acting commander of the I Corps, replacing Division General Andres Rodriguez.

Brigadier General Juan de Dios Garbett as acting commander of the III Corps, replacing Division General Eduardo Sanchez.

Brigadier General Juan Manuel Campos Guillen acting commander of Combat Support, replacing Brigadier General Alejandro Schreiber.

Brigadier General Victor Antonio Aguilera Torres as acting commander of Logistics Command, replacing Division General Cesar Machuca Vargas.

Colonel DEM [Graduate from the Staff School] Eduardo Allende as acting commander of the 5th Infantry Division, replacing Colonel DEM Estanislao Lesme Gimenez.

Colonel DEM Solano Ignacio Gamarra as acting commander of the Eighth Infantry Division, replacing Brigadier General Ismael Otazu Insaurralde.

Colonel DEM Dario Gonzalez Duarte as acting commander of the Sixth Infantry Division, replacing Brigadier General Juan Manuel Campos Guillen.

Colonel DEM Ricardo Antonio Rojas Ortiz as acting commander of the First Infantry Division, replacing Brigadier General Eumelio Bernal Gimenez.

Colonel DEM Jose Miguel Gimenez Caceres as acting commander of the Engineering Corps, replacing Brigadier General Alejandro Schreiber.

Colonel DEM Pablo Feschenko as commander of the Third Infantry Division, replacing Brigadier General Juan de Dios Garbett.

Colonel DEM Galo Longino Escobar as acting commander of the Mariscal Francisco Solano Lopez Military School, replacing Brigadier General Luis Esteban Olmedo Ortiz.

Colonel DEM Mario Rodolfo Escobar Anzoategui as acting commander of the Second Infantry Division, replacing Brigadier General Ricardo Bogado Silva.

Colonel DEM Oscar Rodrigo Diaz Delmas as acting deputy chief of staff of the Armed Forces replacing Brigadier General Francisco Alejandro Ruiz Diaz Vasquez.

Colonel DEM Aladino Manuel Enciso Ojeda as commander of the First Military High School, replacing Colonel DEM Rogelio Levy Acuna.

Colonel DEM Pedro Concepcion de la Cruz Ocampos as acting commander of the 4th Infantry Division, replacing Brigadier General Ramon Humberto Garcete.

Colonel DEM Fernando Bejarano Mario as commander of the Colonel Juan Francisco Lopez Military High School, replacing Colonel DEM Agustin Sanchez Rodriguez.

Colonel DEM Francisco Aristides Talavera Mosqueda as acting commander of the Armed Forces Command and General Staff School, replacing Brigadier General Francisco Sanchez Gonzalez.

Colonel DEM Dionisio Cabello Amarilla as acting commander of the Air Force, replacing Brigadier General Alcibiades Ramon Soto Valleau.

Colonel DEM Rodolfo Davalos Chenu as acting director of the Military Geographic Service, replacing General Abraham Abed.

Colonel DEM Oscar Arcadio Saucedo Rojas as commander of the Armed Forces Officer Advance Course, replacing Colonel DEM Ramon Rivas Martinez.

Colonel DEM Francisco Luis Rodriguez Gonzalez as acting commander of the Seventh Infantry Division, replacing Brigadier General Alfredo Diosnel Zelaya.

Colonel DEM Mario Gonzalez Caceres as acting director of the Recruiting and Mobilization Service, replacing Brigadier General Bernardino Peralta Baez.

Colonel DEM Regis Anibal Romero Espinola as acting chief of the Presidential Military Cabinet, replacing Division General Guillermo Federico Clebsch.

Colonel DEM Antonio Garcete as commander of the Military Reserves Training Center, CIMEFOR, replacing Colonel DEM Victor Martinez Duarte.

Colonel DEM Lino Cesar Oviedo Silva as acting commander of the First Cavalry Division, replacing Brigadier General Victor Antonio Aguilera Torres.

Colonel DEM Antonio Dejesus Martinez Lezcano as military aide de camp to His Excellency the President of the Nation.

This decree carries the signature of the president of the nation.

List of Casualties Posted in Military Hospital

PY0802034589 Asuncion ULTIMA HORA in Spanish 7 Feb 89 p 13

[Text] A list of 27 people who died the night of 2-3 February was posted in one of the military hospital departments. The list provided the names of those who died and their detachments. It is believed that an earlier list of 17 people who died was a temporary one. A final figure reportedly will be issued later, after all hospital institutions have been checked.

One of the lists of dead entitled: "List of Dead Received on 3 February," at the Military Hospital, includes the following names: Ramon Vera, Fidencio Ayala, Benito Farina, Gustavo Gomez, Mario Santacruz, Bernardino Medina, Ramon Gonzalez, Victor Ramirez, Jose Galeano, Ruben Rivas, Matildo Dominguez, Lider Rojas, Gilberto Leguizamon, Daniel Jara, Paulino Talavera, Manuel Arce, Tranquilino Gonzalez, Victor Enciso, Domingo Benegas, NN [no name] Frutos Morel, Hugo Acuna, NN Romero, Alain P. R. Ludtsotner (a French citizen); while the others are identified as NN.

Sixteen of those who died are soldiers from the REP (believed to be an accronym for the Presidential Escort Regiment); one of them belonged to the LICEMIL (Military School); one, to the CDF (River Defense Corps); and one, to the DC1 (Cavalry Regiment No 1).

Four other lists were also posted, but these did not specify whether those listed were dead or injured soldiers. One of them lists the names of 18 who were hospitalized at the Social Security Institute Hospital. A second lists 28 wounded. A third lists the names of nine soldiers, two officers, and one noncommissioned officer, but their condition was not specified. The fourth list had 12 names.

ANTELCO Chief Resigns; Radio Nanduti Operating

PY0702135389 Asuncion EL DIARIO in Spanish
7 Feb 89 special supplement p 8

[Text] According to sources from the National Administration for Telecommunications, ANTELCO, its administrator, Colonel Francisco Feliciano Duarte has resigned.

It has also been reported that Colonel Miguel Cirilo Guanes, retired, who is president of the ANTELCO Administrative Council, took over the administration yesterday.

According to ANTELCO spokesmen, Guanes gave instructions to his employees to authorize the radio stations that were prohibited from operating to go on the air. In light of this, Radio Nanduti has begun its programs on an experimental basis.

Former Official Allegedly Attempts Suicide

PY0802150889 Asuncion Radio Caritas in Spanish
1402 GMT 8 Feb 89

[Relay by Sergio Araujo from a mobile unit]

[Excerpt] We have a report from Osvaldo Palacios, Public Relations chief of the Police Department.

[Begin recording] [Palacios] Good morning members of the press.

[Reporter] We would like some information on the rumors surrounding the former Post Office director Modesto Esquivel [former member of the Colorado Party Executive Board].

[Palacios] We would like to report that, on 7 February, Esquivel went to the house of a relative named Britez.

Acting on information received, police personnel went to arrest him. He tried to shoot himself in the mouth but he only injured himself. He was taken to the Police Hospital. We know that he is well. He is already talking and eating some food. He will recover in a few days.

[Reporter] Is this all the information you have?

[Palacios] This is all the information I have at this time.

[Reporter] Can the press visit him?

[Palacios] No, not yet. There is no decision yet. Later when he is taken to another place he may talk to the press. He will give the information you want.

[Reporter] Will he remain under arrest after he recovers?

[Palacios] I believe he will. We will see what decision is made at higher levels. That decision is the one that will be enforced. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Venezuela

President Perez Holds News Conference 4 Feb

PA0402210789 Caracas Domestic Service in Spanish
1351 GMT 4 Feb 89

[News conference held by President Carlos Andres Perez at the Miraflores Presidential Palace in Caracas; moderated by unidentified director of the Venezuelan Central Information Office—live]

[Text] [Perez] Foreign and national journalists, I want to sincerely thank all the representatives of the international media who were here for my presidential inauguration. I thank you because the presence of so many important journalists here is an honor for Venezuela. I beg you to excuse any inconvenience you may have suffered these past few days. We are not used to having so many friendly visitors. Our position and our intentions are cordial and friendly. The same goes for my fellow countrymen, the national journalists.

Now, to waste no time, I leave it to you to begin the news conference.

[Moderator] We will begin the news conference by announcing the return of Gabriel Garcia Marquez, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, to his old profession of journalist. He worked for a long time as a journalist in Caracas. Our colleague Garcia Marquez will ask the first question:

[Garcia Marquez] Let us suppose today is 4 February 1994. You have just presented to your successor a reestablished country living in peace at the conclusion of a difficult but fruitful period in history. My question is, what is the difference between this Venezuela of today, 4 February 1994, and the Venezuela you knew 5 years ago? Second: To what extent did you contribute to make the dreams of integration, autonomy, and full democracy in Latin America a reality, and do you feel tempted to ask your people to give you a third opportunity, following two 5-year periods, at the Biblical age of 81?

[Perez] It is really a pleasure to have the honor of being asked the first question by a Latin American as distinguished as Garcia Marquez. The only problem is that he has tried to pull me into the torrents of his imagination. I want to tell him that today, in 1994, I do not feel as if I have lived through 100 years of solitude [reference to novel by Garcia Marquez entitled "One Hundred Years of Solitude," for which he won the Nobel Prize] [laughter]

I am sure that we have accomplished our mission. That is why the Venezuelan workers are on the streets to welcome me again.

The truth is that we are accomplishing our mission. I can say that we have accomplishsed a very important task: We have promoted Latin American integration because our countries have no alternative but to make agreements among our nations to strengthen our position in our relations with the United States and with the European Community, which is what we have done.

We have struggled against a new kind of imperialism, the imperialism of science and technology. We have opened doors and we are now introducing the Venezuela and the Latin America of the year 2000. This is what I will say on 4 February 1994.

Regarding another presidential term, my dear friend Gabo [nickname for Garcia Marquez], my saying that I would seek another term would be an unbearable affront to my fellow party militants who would like to be president. I am sure they would not approve a constitutional reform such as that. For this reason, I will not even consider, as of right now, that possibility.

[Moderator] The next question is from a foreign journalist we are pleased to have among us: Flora Lewis of THE NEW YORK TIMES.

[Lewis] Mr President, the night before last you had a meeting with Presidents Castro, Ortega, Garcia, and Arias. Can you tell us what went on at that meeting?

[Perez] Thank you. I am pleased, I repeat, with the presence here of journalists as well-known and well-regarded as Flora Lewis.

I decided to take advantage of this inauguration to talk in Venezuela about the main problems of Latin America. I did not want this inauguration to be just a traditional fiesta to celebrate a constitutional and democratic transition of power. I wanted this to set the stage for the beginning of the policies that must be implemented in the future. This is why I very much wanted Commanders Fidel Castro and Daniel Ortega to be here. I must say that they were not invited to come for reasons of protocol, but because we have to really open the doors to dialogue with all sectors and political forces that are seeking change in Latin America.

The presence of these two leaders was important to discuss the problems of Central America. The presence of President Oscar Arias was also very important. He had problems getting permission to travel from the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica. I must thank the governing party as well as the opposition party of Costa Rica for calling a special legislative session to make it possible for President Arias to come to Venezuela.

We held several meetings, not just one. The presidents of Central America—President Cerezo of Guatemala, President Azcona of Honduras, President Arias of Costa Rica, and President Ortega of Nicaragua—participated. We regret the absence, for obvious reasons, of President Duarte at this meeting.

These were closed-door meetings not for the sake of secrecy but because we wanted to speak frankly and sincerely about the Central American situation, about the grand opportunities that have emerged within the extraordinary framework of detente that exists nowadays in international politics as a result of agreements between the Soviet Union and the United States. This is a grand opportunity to establish a fruitful dialogue aimed at putting an end to the dramatic situation that exists in that Latin American region.

We also hope that the change of governments in the United States—where there is continuity in policies, since the current U.S. President was vice president in the past administration of President Reagan—will serve to open new possibilities so that Latin America, and Central America in particular, may become more directly involved, under less pressure, in the search for finding ways to resolve these problems.

Our talks were frank and clear. We told President Ortega we are concerned over the fact that no definite framework has been set and no clear signs have been given for democratization in Nicaragua. In our talks with U.S. Vice President Quayle, we told him that we trust it will be possible to initiate a clear, direct, and open dialogue with the Bush administration and that we will be able to sincerely and spontaneously cooperate to find a democratic and negotiated solution to the Central American crisis.

[Moderator] Now, Brazilian politician and colleague Clovis Rossi of Sao Paulo's FOLHA.

[Rossi] Mr President, yesterday the Group of Eight appointed you as their representative to negotiate with the United States, Japan, and the EEC on the Latin American debt problem. The solution you are seeking may involve a reduction in the total Latin American debt. Bearing these facts in mind, I have two questions. First, when and where—in which of these countries—will you begin your mission? Second, what will happen if the creditors continue to refuse to reduce the total debt? Will the Latin American countries continue with their usual rhetoric, or will they adopt a stronger position, such as a collective moratorium?

[Perez] I was very pleased with what my colleagues in the Group of Eight said during our meeting. I was especially pleased to hear the Mexican and Argentine foreign ministers explain what the Group of Eight had been doing since its meetings in Acapulco and Punta del Este and the group's finance ministers' meeting in Rio de Janeiro. I was pleased because it is obvious that progress has been made.

First of all, the group has adopted a firmer position on behalf of Latin America. This was best expressed by the decisions made by the finance ministers during their meeting. The complete report of this meeting has not been made public, because it will serve as a draft for discussing Latin America's new position with the industrialized countries. Latin America no longer hides behind rhetoric—it now makes specific proposals. In fact, Latin America is proposing a substantial debt reduction that also takes into account our countries' secondary markets in the industrialized nations. The document we have released is the presidents' reaffirmation of what our ministers had approved in the Rio de Janeiro meeting.

Second, we have prudently agreed to continue top-level discussions on this problem, which has become unbearable for every country in the region.

I have not exactly been appointed the group's representative on this issue. In fact, all of the area presidents are urging that talks begin as soon as possible. We will support talks that make serious and definite progress toward the solution of a problem that has become the greatest obstacle to the welfare and development of the peoples of Latin America. As a president who has just begun his term, I was deeply impressed by my colleagues, the presidents of the Group of Eight, who decided to act firmly, discreetly, and with determination for an early solution. Such a solution is urgent, not only because our economies are in danger, but also because our democracies themselves are threatened.

[Moderator] The next question is from veteran journalist Rogelio Garcia Lupo of the Buenos Aires EL PERIODISTA.

[Garcia Lupo] Mr President, President Alfonsin's absence from Caracas, for reasons we all know, yesterday prompted the heads of state present in Caracas to issue a declaration of solidarity with Argentina's democracy.

[Perez] All the heads of state who met in Venezuela—not only those in the Group of Eight, but all the heads of state and government leaders—categorically expressed their anxiety over the current dangerous instability in Argentine democracy. All the leaders are determined to maintain a heightened vigilance in this regard, while fully respecting the principle of nonintervention in Argentina's situation. We are determined not to accept any forceful move toward toppling President Alfonsin's democratic government. We are satisfied to see that democracy in Argentina is apparently once again being consolidated. The strength with which President Raul Alfonsin has quelled the attempts toward regression have been paramount in reestablishing order and peace in this great South American republic.

At the same time, the active solidarity with Argentina shown by all Latin American and European governments surely will guarantee that no one will dare try to violently overthrow Argentine democracy.

We also see in Paraguay encouraging signs of a democratization process for Latin America. We still do not have reliable reports, but we know Mr Stroessner is now in the company of his military buddy Pinochet in Chile. Although we know that the general that led the Argentine [as heard] forces has appointed a cabinet made up of people and politicians belonging to the old regime, we also know that there are specific and categorical promises that Paraguay will move immediately toward a normal democracy. This is great news. This is my best inaugural gift. Also, the best news in the southern cone is that democracy is secure and that Alfonsin's government will be able to turn over his office to his successor as part of a normal democratic process. [applause]

[Moderator] We will now hear from our distinguished colleague Nicaraguan journalist Pedro Joaquin Chamorro.

[Chamorro] President Perez, in your talks with Commander Ortega and Commander Fidel Castro, did you find the faith and willingness that would make you feel certain that during your term there will be a deep democratization process in Nicaragua and that El Salvador will also find the path to peace and national reconciliation?

[Perez] I want to tell the local and international press very sincerely that I was satisfied with the dialogue held with Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega—both when seeing him alone and with the group of other presidents, as I have already mentioned. I know there is much passion in the debates over Central America. Regrettably, many people in our America become exasperated and sometimes take positions that are contrary to the democratic ideals they claim to practice. These people do not want to see dialogue as an option, and they criticize me for having invited Fidel

Castro and Ortega. There is no more antidemocratic attitude than that. Democracy grows and improves when it shows it has the ability to talk with all sectors, knowing that the moral authority of our country's system and process compels us to try and contribute toward democratizing other countries.

President Ortega made very specific statements at our meetings. Of course, it is not appropriate for me to reveal those statements, because they are a part of the process of discussions within the framework of Esquipulas II. However, I am certain that Presidents Arias, Azcona, and Cerezo are taking back to their respective countries a very firm hope that the meeting of the five Central American presidents on 13 and 14 February in San Salvador, El Salvador will have positive results and that the process of democratization in the area will become a reality. It is incredible how quiet and friendly the mood of these talks was. I felt very proud to be a witness to the start of this new dialogue among these countries.

[Moderator] Now we shall hear from a very active Latin American journalist, our colleague (Jucca Julius) from Mexico's EXCELSIOR.

[(Julius)] Mr President, I would like you to discuss, if you can, the problem of Panama, which you know so well. I have three interrelated questions: What prospects do you see for Panama's democratization? Do you believe it is essential that General Noriega resign as military commander to help this process? Finally, what possibility is there of Panama rejoining the Group of Eight?

[Perez] This is a very painful and delicate issue for me. As people both here and abroad know, I participated very actively in the Panamanian struggle to recover sovereignty over the Canal Zone, and I established a very close friendship with the unforgettable General Omar Torrijos. After the canal matter was resolved, and in response to a letter from me—which he made public—regarding the process of democratization in that country, Torrijos began that process with great sincerity and with a broad scope.

Unfortunately, Gen Torrijos' tragic death started a very dramatic process in Panama, a regression in which the Defense Forces of that sister nation have been assuming an increasingly greater role in governing the state, thereby undoing Gen Torrijos' efforts to give Panama a genuine civilian government. Panama is now obligated, in the eyes of the world, to preserve its sovereignty over the canal and to demonstrate to the world that a Latin American government—the Panamanian Government—can responsibly carry out tasks as important as guaranteeing that the Panama Canal is available to world traffic within a reliable democratic system.

I do not wish to say too much in my answer, because I still hope to be able, through my relations with all Panamanian political circles and my broad and cordial relations with the U.S. Government, to contribute to a solution to the Panamanian problem without traumas of any kind. I hope to contribute to restoring an authentic democratic process in that country and to ensuring that the upcoming elections are not fraudulent, but represent the sovereign expression of the Panamanian people's will.

That is why I assumed the responsibility of inviting the minister in charge of the Panamanian Presidency to my inauguration, even though I knew the prevailing feeling of the Latin American leaders is that they would have preferred he not be here. He gave me sincere explanations of the situation, and I again told him...[changes thought] And I sent a message to President Noriega [as heard] in an attempt to remind him of his duties to history and his duty to defend the name of Torrijos, who is one of the great leaders of Latin American democracy.

It is not for me to make judgments as to whether or not Gen Noriega should or should not leave the Defense Forces. However, I can make a comment: Panama has proclaimed itself to be a democratic country. It has a Constitution and laws that establish the period in which a military man can serve in the Armed Forces. Therefore, if Gen Noriega complies with these regulations, he would be doing a great service to Panama and Latin America by giving up his military power when the Panamanian Constitution and laws so order. I believe that is the answer to your first question.

What was the other question? The incorporation of Panama into the Group of Eight. Well, regrettably, until there are firm and clear signs of a resumption of the democratic process in Panama, I see no possibility of that country rejoining the Group of Eight. I had hoped that with the visit of Solis Palma, the minister in charge of the Panamanian Presidency, we would hear important announcements that I had heard were being discussed within the Panamanian Government: the opening of the country to all exiles; the release of political and military prisoners; the reorganization of the Electoral Tribunal to have it include representatives trusted by the opposition; and the modification of the Electoral Law to guarantee an absolutely clean electoral process.

Unfortunately, we have not heard the Republic of Panama make those sovereign commitments. However, in the name of the Latin American people and the Venezuelan people, and in the name of our affection for Panama and of the solidarity we extended in defense of the implementation of the Torrijos-Carter treaties, I hereby express the hope that these guarantees will be extended to the Panamanian opposition. I hope the Panamanian Government will give us the gratifying pleasure of again experiencing the happiness and faith we felt on the day that Carter and Torrijos signed the agreement.

[Moderator] We will now give the floor to a very incisive international analyst: Marcel Nivergan of Paris' LE MONDE.

[Nivergan] Mr President, could you tell us about the proposal you formulated at the meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos on the possible creation of a multilateral organization to relieve the developing countries of the foreign debt burden?

[Perez] First of all, my friend Nivergan, let me tell you how happy I am to have you here with us. You obviously deserve to be praised as one of France's great journalists. You have always shown concern over Latin America's problems and have made the fairest and most genuine observations about our region. We in Venezuela consider you a defender of international democracy and justice.

The Davos meeting was very important. We were able to speak to important industrial figures of great international prestige. During a discussion of the foreign debt, I had the opportunity to share the floor with IMF Director Camdessus, with U.S. Treasury Department representative Mulford, and with the FRG economy minister. Mr Camdessus' statements were highly satisfactory. They show that a profound opening is taking place in the IMF and that the IMF is becoming more aware of the developing nations' reality. I still cannot say that I feel confident or satisfied. But there is indeed an important opening that may prove to be positive for the IMF's international financial relations with Latin America.

The U.S. representative, unfortunately, used the tough language we are used to hearing from the U.S. Administration. In spite of this, I have confidence in what President George Bush told me and in the hopes he gave me when I had the honor of talking to him when we were both presidents-elect. I hope that now that he is President of the United States, he will become our ally in the search for a solution to the debt problem.

The FRG representative's position makes us realize that Europe—and particularly the FRG, a country of great economic importance—has new expectations for better understanding and a better relationship with Latin America.

My position is very clear and is shared by all the Latin American countries. We have spent $200 billion over the last 5 years, and yet we have been unable to reduce our debt because of the extremely high interest rates. We have been the victims of these interest rates, because they have depleted Latin America of its resources.

Meanwhile, this capital—which serves no benefit whatsoever for Latin America—is given to the international banks. The international banks, in turn, have written off a great deal, if not all, of the debt. This kind of reasoning seems fair, and we hope this new development will be taken into account so that the debt will be substantially reduced.

The current average of the Latin American debt has been reduced by 60 percent in the secondary markets. Therefore, it would not be out of the question to have the debt reduced to 40 or 50 percent of its current face value. To achieve this, we think an international institution must take charge of the debt, buying it from creditor banks through the IMF's special draft rights. This is the essence of the [Group of Eight] proposal. Furthermore, so as not to have to create a new organization, the IMF itself and the World Bank would be in charge of these new negotiations. Reducing the debt to 50 percent would also imply reducing the interest to 50 percent. We could thus begin to deal with the payment of the debt according to each of our countries' economic conditions.

Several European countries support this proposal, as do important members of the international financial system, especially from the United States. To be honest, however, we still have not seen any signs of support for this solution. This is why the Group of Eight countries will promote a top-level dialogue with the industrialized nations. It is our hope that George Bush will be the first with whom we will negotiate. We, of course, will not act dogmatically. We do not intend to impose solutions. We are open to discussing other proposals. What is definitely clear is that the countries of Latin America, Africa, and the rest of the Third World cannot continue to pay their debt under the irrational conditions in which the debt is being collected.

Let me make this clear to the foreign media. Venezuela has been the only developing country that has paid its interest on time. It has been the only developing country that has paid off some of the principal of that debt. Yet we continue to owe more or less the same amount.

Second, we have not received in compensation any fresh funds to confront our situations, and we have devoted an average of 50 percent of the value of our exports to servicing the debt. This means it is an absolutely intolerable situation. Besides, during 1988 we paid out 70 percent of the value of our exports because of the drop in oil prices.

This has brought us into a very difficult situation. Our working or liquid international reserves have become depleted during these past years, and we have now found ourselves forced to suspend payments on the principal and to negotiate with the international financing system to obtain new resources that will permit us primarily to have guarantees to be able to satisfy our need to import components and basic materials for our country while continuing to service the debt, to meet the interest payments. All other Latin American countries are in the same situation; the destabilization processes that have been experienced in Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina have been essentially brought about by the sacrifices the democratic governments of these nations have had to make to service the debt.

I quoted a phrase from Uruguayan President Sanguinetti at SELA—at the meeting we presidents of the region held to express our solidarity with this extraordinary organization for Latin American solidarity and concerted action. President Sanguinetti said very clearly that the countries that want us to build democracy—the United States, Europe, Japan, etc.—do not let us build democracy, and he pointed out that the economic situation that results from the manner in which the debt has been collected from us is weakening the still weak democratic process in the region.

Mr Nivergan, it is our hope that the situation will improve during the next few months, that Felipe Gonzalez, as head of the EEC, in coordination with French President Mitterrand and FRG Chancellor Kohl—who, during a conversation I held with him, surprised me with a truly positive, understanding position of the reality of our countries...[changes thought] That during its next meeting, the EEC will help us by presenting a position that will help open paths to a just rescheduling of the foreign debt of our countries on the American Continent and in Africa.

[Moderator] Now, a prolific journalist and editor, Miguel Angel Diez of LATIN AMERICAN NEWSLETTER, will ask questions:

[Diez] Mr President, in 1992 the EEC will be a market without any internal borders and with 350 million consumers with high purchasing power. The United States, which is afraid of the emergence of a protectionist sentiment in Europe, is organizing its own North American common market through its bilateral relations with Canada, and is in some way trying to bring Mexico closer to this scheme. Japan is extending its influence over Southeast Asia, over its trade partners in Southeast Asia. Bilateralism and protectionism seem to be going hand in hand in the industrialized world. Meanwhile, GATT's Uruguay round is stagnant—as was demonstrated a few days ago in Montreal—and Latin America and the Third World in general are faced with the new situation of huge trade blocs being based on bilateral relations, which may leave us out of the big international trade currents. My question is: What strategy should Latin America pursue in this context and at this time, and what will the Venezuelan Government's position, stance, or attitude be in this regard?

[Perez] Here lies a big challenge for the developing countries, especially for Latin America—a big challenge that will test the sense of international justice of the United States, Canada, the EEC, and Japan. In fact, the prospect causing us the most anxiety is the weakening of our countries' economies while the EEC is created and becomes closed—within a very short time frame, before the year 2000. Three powerful markets—the U.S.-Canadian market, the EEC market, and the Japanese market—will intertwine their exchange and trade activities and exclude, weakened and dependent, the remaining countries of the world.

We broached this subject with Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez during his most pleasant visit to Venezuela. In addition, at a meeting we held yesterday at La Casona [Venezuelan presidential residence] before the luncheon I gave to all missions that attended my inauguration—at which Latin American presidents, Latin American and Caribbean heads of state, and EEC member Portugue President Mario Soares were present—we, the Latin American and Caribbean heads of state, asked President Soares to inform his partners in the international community, the EEC, and especially Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez that we are delegating to Spain and Portugal—which are so closely linked to our Latin American world—the responsibility for opening, soon, a dialogue to enable our admission [insercion] into the E.

Regarding Mexico, I am most confident that in the current situation—even though Mexico will always maintain very important relations with the United States, the way we do in the entire Latin American region—Mexico will, as President Salinas de Gortari has pointed out to me, strengthen and promote relations with Latin America. The Mexican foreign secretary has already announced in statements disseminated by news agencies that President Salinas de Gortari will surely come to Venezuela in June or July in response to an invitation from me.

This will not be a protocol visit or a visit to repeat that we are increasing relations and cordiality between our two countries. Instead we, the two presidents, hope to sign concrete and substantive agreements not only to expand Mexican-Venezuelan relations but to make our country, at the northern tip of South America, a path to intensify relations between Mexico and Venezuela and between Venezuela and the rest of Latin America, and to link up the integration initiative that Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay have worked out. Therefore, I intend to appoint high-level personal representatives within the next few days to visit with the Mexican Government and expedite a dialogue to identify the possibilities for integration between Mexico and Venezuela.

[Moderator] Gabriel Molina, of the Cuban newspaper GRANMA, will now ask questions.

[Molina] We want to know if your plans include having Venezuela join the Nonaligned Movement countries in a [word indistinct] way. What are the plans of Venezuela and Latin America plans in this regard?

[Perez] The big industrialized countries have always had reservations about the existence of the Nonaligned Movement and the Group of 77, which already comprises 126 countries. An attempt has been made to unjustly depict the presence of the Third World countries in these organizations as a position of confrontation with the United States and other industrialized countries. This is not true. Latin America and the developing world in general have to exert their right to attain precise

and clear-cut coordination to consolidate and strengthen the bargaining power we need to reach understanding with the industrialized nations, which still refuse to understand they are unduly making use of privileges that limit and undermine the development possibilities and, above all, the well-being of our nations.

All nations have the responsibility of reactivating the nonaligned group. That is why I made a special trip to Yugoslavia before being sworn in as president of the Republic, to talk with the president of that country and with other officials about our decision to become a member of the Nonaligned Movement. Venezuela made a request in this regard in the early 1980's. I also went there to announce that in September I will attend the Nonaligned Movement summit in Yugoslavia. I feel it is necessary for Latin America to do this and to reactivate the Group of 77. I also had the occasion and honor of receiving in Venezuela the visit by members of the South Commission headed by Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere. We also held a very broad meeting in Caraballeda to persuade the South Commission to join the efforts to mobilize the Third World into seeking a more just and active relationship with the industrialized world.

I believe that although the 1980's were regrettable and almost perverse to the interests of developing countries, in this last year of this decade we are preparing to begin in the 1990's very dynamic, active, and aggressive activity to incorporate ourselves into this world of large blocs forming before our eyes; in view of this, we cannot remain indifferent.

[Moderator] Continuing, we will now hear our colleague Miguel Angel Bastenier of EL PAIS of Madrid.

[Bastenier] I have noted that a project to extend and intensify Venezuelan foreign policy is to be carried out and that it will be intensely Latin American in content. In view of the possible establishment of a new set of rules, at least at a Caribbean level, I believe Fidel Castro's presence at the innaguration ceremony certainly marks a new phase in Cuban-Venezuelan relations. I would like to ask the president if the new project includes—perhaps at an almost personal level—an attempt, an ambitious attempt, to incorporate or reincorporate Cuba, Castro's Cuba, into the Latin American political game?

[Perez] You are correct in stating we are going to intensify Venezuela's presence in the international community. Venzuelan democracy has been fortunate in that all its governments from 1958 to the present have had the same foreign policy guidelines. I seek to give this policy more depth. I believe the importance we give to international relations was stated clearly in my inauguration speech. I believe there is no possibility of implementing domestic policies that will allow us to develop and attain our people's well-being if we do not amply and decisively participate at international forums. The destinies of our countries are not decided within our countries' borders.

Latin America has to integrate itself totally. It has to integrate, surpassing ideological differences, within authentic pluralism. This is how President Echeverria and I understood it in 1975, when we created SELA. Cuba joined this organization and was thus given the opportunity to return to undertake Latin American tasks and responsibilities. Undoubtedly, Fidel Castro's regime is absolutely different from ours, and we do not share our Caribbean colleague's ideology. Moreover, we are concerned that now that the USSR has brought hope with the perestroyka and glasnost proposals presented by Mr Gorbachev, our friend Fidel Castro, perhaps showing his conservatism, has stated that he is the only remaining Marxist-Leninist in the international communist world. I want to tell Fidel from this tribune that we need him to join Latin America but that we are also interested in his taking steps in the new direction, because he has proven to be a very intelligent man. We want the mature Cuban leader to join us in the Latin American process so the Cuban people may have a fuller participation in Latin America's international relations with the developed world. [applause]

[Moderator] Now, a well-known Colombian journalist who is a friend of Venezuela: Plinio Apuleyo Mendoza of EL TIEMPO in Bogota.

[Puleyo] Mr President, would you tell us the scope of the agreement you signed with President Barco yesterday? Does it attempt—as Foreign Minister Tejera said—to soften the blows in Colombian-Venezuelan relations?

[Perez] Imperceptibly, and without the Venezuelans' or the Colombians' desire, a sort of rift had come between us in the past few months; it was similar to a unofficial breaking of relations. We needed to open our relations and lessen the rift for the good of Latin American integration, the relations we hope to maintain, and for our joint presence in the Group of Eight. I am very happy to have signed an agreement with President Barco in the presence of all the Latin American leaders. The agreement seeks to open normal channels for our relations and to reach solutions to our problems. It also gives importance to the solution to our border problems. Venezuela and Colombia have one of the world's most active borders, and we do not have rules or preestablished norms to conduct these relations. Relations between Venezuela and Colombia have thus been held through informal channels. This fact led me to once state that perhaps we will have to build a statue to the smugglers, because they have established relations and integration between Colombia and Venezuela. [applause]

[Moderator] Richard Bordeaux of THE LOS ANGELES TIMES is next.

[Bordeaux] Mr President, you have talked about progress in meetings held here toward the achievement of peace of Nicaragua. I have a two-part questions. To what extent has this progress been made possible by the exit of President Reagan and Assistant Secretary Elliott Abrams and the absence of a well-defined and detailed policy on the part of the new U.S. Administration toward the Central American region? Also, what specific commitments were expressed in meetings held here on the part of Vice President Quayle, President Fidel Castro, and Central American presidents that might give us hope for a solution to the Salvadoran conflict?

[Perez] I wish to say we are not interested in comparing the governments of President Reagan and President Bush, just as we in Venezuela would not be interested in comparing the governments of President Lusinchi and my government, the government of Carlos Andres Perez, because it happens that in the two cases presidential succession took place within the same party; the Republican Party there and the Democratic Action Party here.

However, we believe an advantage of a change in government without a change in party is that the new president feels greater freedom and psychologically feels that he has greater opportunities to review the guidelines that have been followed and to apply rectifications or reforms that we must gradually implement in our policy without altering that extraordinary status known as continuity.

I believe that this great possibility of viewing things from a new perspective, which is related to the achievements of President Gorbachev and President Reagan during the last few months of President Reagan's administration, is open to President Bush.

I am talking about this extraordinary international detente that had not been experienced since postwar days. The new administration of President Bush will become a part of this new relationship between the great powers, which influences all world problems. This is why we are confident there will be a new era in the relationship between Latin America and the new U.S. Government.

I would not say we have made commitments during our meetings here with Central American leaders, including Daniel Ortega, or with Fidel Castro. I would say the presence of Fidel Castro and Daniel Ortega, together with other Central American heads of state, has had extraordinary significance, because it allowed us to begin a cordial dialogue and clearly establish genuine possibilities of reaching an understanding and establishing cooperation among our countries.

As for Cuba, it also helps us normalize diplomatic relations between Venezuela and Cuba. As for Central America, we were able to start talks, within an informal atmosphere of absolute sincerity, that will formally take place at the next Central American presidential meeting that is part of the Esquipulas II program.

[Moderator] This is Michael Reid of THE GUARDIAN of London.

[Reid] Mr President, your government has initiated negotiations with the IMF. In view of what you said before, I wish to ask whether you have noticed changes in attitude, which you referred to, on the part of the IMF within such negotiations or, on the contrary, whether your government will face the unpleasant obligation of having to implement a recession adjustment program widely known in Latin America as the IMF [fondo monetarista] adjustment.

[Perez] I can say with great satisfaction that I need not regret anything I have said in the past about the IMF. I have harshly criticized it. However, I have said we are basically a symbol of international reality, that the IMF is not simply an expression of its managing board, that the IMF is the expression of the industrialized world, that President Reagan, Mrs Thatcher, and President Mitterrand basically share the same responsiblity.

I have said there has been no ideological confrontation within the IMF, but that there has been an attitude of thoughtlessness and disregard on the part of the industrialized world toward the realities of the developing world. I have said IMF policy is also the policy of a world of international injustice created by the victors of World War II. I have often said this.

I have also said that we must reach an understanding with the IMF directly or indirectly, because even though at a given time we might not have to resort to IMF resources and in turn subject ourselves directly to its conditions through international banks, we are affected anyway, because in the existing system, the international banks are totally obedient to the IMF mandates and thus IMF conditions are indirectly imposed on us anyway. The IMF, with little attention and regard to the dramatic realities of our peoples, has been applying those conditions. This is the position I have been maintaining. I have always believed we are inevitably IMF prisoners.

However, I have also said that the statements of Mr Camdessus clearly show an important change in IMF behavior. Before, it was only concerned with recession adjustments. Today it is beginning to recognize that our economies must grow and that the payment of our debt cannot be separated from growth. This is a significant change, but this change is still a theory; it is not yet in practice, but we hope this will happen.

Venezuela is indeed negotiating with the IMF. However, we have not waited for the IMF to present its conditions to us. We have presented our own reasons or our own plan to the IMF, and we have been discussing and explaining it. We in Venezuela will not implement a policy of recession, but we will reach an undertanding with the IMF.

[Moderator] Next we will give the floor to Latin American journalist Jorge Otero, director of the Montevideo daily EL DIA.

[Otero] Mr President, I have two questions: First, how would you interpret the Caracas declaration expressing solidarity with the Argentine democracy? In other words, how would you interpret the active solidarity you mentioned earlier?

My second question is: We Latin Americans have been talking about integration since the last century—long before this was discussed in Europe, by the way. Do you think that at the beginning of the next century we will at least be electing the members of the Latin American Parliament?

[Perez] I believe the Caracas declaration is unmistakable evidence that Latin American countries would not remain insensitive or indifferent to the recidivist forces' attempts to oust the Alfonsin government. We would actively work with Argentine political and social forces and with all countries to create a wall that would prevent recidivist forces from destroying Argentina. This was the language we used in the Group of Eight meeting, and this is what the message we sent to President Alfonsin tries to convey. This message was also signed afterward by all other heads of state who came to my inauguration.

My friend Otero, I think that in Latin America there were no talks about integration during the past century. Our forefathers talked about it, and all those who founded Latin America talked about it—Simon Bolivar, [Argentine General Jose de] San Martin, [Mexican Patriot Jose Maria] Morelos, [Chilean General Bernardo] O'Higgins—and all those who founded our countries talked about the great Latin American fatherland. Unfortunately, those who continued the work forgot about our forefathers' message, and Latin America has been struggling along in its history with an increasing disintegration. The integration process actually began in the last decades of this century—not even 30 years ago—which is when an awareness of the need for integration began in Latin America.

We cannot feel frustrated, particularly when we consider that it took centuries to begin the integration process in Europe. Europe had to go through two world wars—world wars played an important role in the European integration process. We must feel optimistic, especially now that the creation of the large international markets about which we were talking a few minutes ago clearly shows us the alternative: We either achieve integration or we will disappear as sovereign nations. We either achieve integration or the multinational corporations from large industrialized countries will do it at our expense. This is a reality we cannot ignore. Fortunately, the fears about what will happen in the future will increase integration actions. We have noticed that this is taking place in Latin America after these horrible years in the 1980's, when the remains of the integration we had achieved during the 1970's almost disappeared.

I am definitely optimistic, and I also believe that gradually, with the intensification and consolidation of the democratic process—which is already showing progress in Chile and Paraguay—political integration will be easier. This Latin American Parliament, which is currently being developed and which is still in the theoretical stage, will gain importance, following the example of what has been done in Europe. During the last decade of this century, we will see great progress in Latin American integration. I dare to be a prophet. Furthermore, I should have told you—in response to Garcia Marquez' question about the future—that in 1994 I will say: Here we give you a Venezuela fully integrated into a Latin American process of solidarity and concerted efforts.

[Moderator] We have the pleasure to have among us Enrique Siliade Gibson, the director of Lima's CARETA magazine. He is also the first Latin American to be president of the International Press Institute.

[Gibson] Mr President, your optimism and enthusiasm reminds me of the promising and defiant years we experienced in Peru in 1985 and 1986. I have several questions that are all part of one big question. Do you believe there was a lack of Latin American support for Peru's proposals and defiant position in those years? Do you believe Peru's daring attitude somehow helped the continent to negotiate on better terms, or did it make matters worse? Is there a lesson we could learn from the Peruvian experience? Finally, looking at the future, do you think that despite, or because of, all that has been said in the past 5 years—which is very much in contrast with the results, which were few—the debtor countries will be able to reach an agreement, avoid a confrontation, and make progress on the debt issue?

[Perez] I know how important CARETAS magazine is. I also know that my statements could help the magazine to come up with some commentaries. However, I have no objection to speaking frankly. You know that I am a close friend of Alan Garcia. Actually, we have a compadrazgo relationship. I will explain for the sake of our European friends that compadrazgo is an important relationship in Latin America. Alan Garcia is an impulsive young man who is a member of a party that for decades was never allowed to participate in the government, not even at the municipal level. He has faced what has been perhaps the most dramatic situation in Latin America, because he had to face a complete lack of international reserves, the crumbling of the Peruvian economy, and a guerrilla movement that does not resemble any of the past or existing guerrilla movements in Latin America.

You know this better than I do. This guerrilla movement goes back to the roots of Peruvian history and the insurgency of the Incas, who were never assimilated or

who never allowed themselves to be assimilated into the culture of the Spanish conquistadors. Unfortunately, this situation continued because Peru lacked truly democratic governments, and the military governments did not permit an assimilation process.

Today's Peru, the Peru of democracy, inherited this painful and terrible situation produced by a guerrilla movement that has created and will continue to create many problems.

This is the situation our friend Alan is facing. A little like Don Quixote, Alan thought he was going to be able to face alone the economic and financial situation that was being created. He was certain he was not going to find solidarity in other Latin American countries. Alan Garcia assumed power when, ridiculously, national egotism was king in our countries.

As the trials and tribulations of Latin America became more acute, we fell into the case-by-case trap set by the industrialized nations. We fell into the trap of egotistically believing we could defend ourselves better separately than as a whole.

Faced with this, Alan Garcia naively—in my opinion—tried to point, through his actions, to a way of solving the debt problem.

Today, the situation is very clear, I believe. It has not been possible to solve the problem. But I ask: What other alternative did Peru have? Could Peru have paid more to its creditors under the economic situation it was facing? Alan Garcia has been a victim of the circumstances the Latin American countries are enduring. The Peruvian experience has been very beneficial. President Alan Garcia has done a great service for Latin America, because he has demonstrated that only by uniting our efforts will we be able to face the tough situation we are going through.

Yesterday, during our meetings, I had the pleasure of hearing the calm words of President Rodriguez—I mean, President Alan Garcia—and his words of complete solidarity and agreement with what we are doing, in line with the finance ministers' declaration. We also had a similar Andean Pact meeting. President Alan Garcia showed that he has gained great experience over the years in ways of expediting the process of reaching agreements for Andean integration.

As you know, we have agreed on important measures. We presidents of the Andean region will meet every 6 months from now on. This is a strong statement about our countries' commitment to integration. Thus, I believe all the Latin American countries will have to learn from both the positive and negative aspects of the Peruvian experience.

[Moderator] We are pleased to give the floor to a well-liked colleague who represents the Chilean people's democratic aspirations. She is Maria Paz del Rio of the Chilean magazine HOY.

[Del Rio] Mr President, how will the commitment made by Venezuela and you personally to democracy in Latin America be expressed during your administration, specifically with regard to relations with Chile?

[Perez] The Venezuelan Government and parties have agreed to maintain relations even with governments that have violated their people's will. That has been our position in our relations with Chile. Today, we can say with satisfaction that Chile now has a clear prospect for democracy. Moreover, President Pinochet, whom we have opposed for so long, today deserves a word of encouragement, because he has acted with sincerity, or at least realistically. Today Chile has a great opportunity to move toward democracy, and we Latin Americans fully support this. We have taken a specific position. We have not been partial toward one or all of the democratic parties in Chile. To us, the most important thing is to establish the basis of Chilean democracy, no matter who wins. Our message today is: Beware, Chilean political leaders, of turning out to be inferior to or unworthy of the people who carried out the feat of defeating Pinochet in the plebiscite. We are already seeing the emergence of several opposition candidates. If this continues, we could say that Chilean political leaders are inadvertently going to conspire against Chilean democracy and they will be responsible for a new disaster in Chile. We hope—and I think we are right in doing so—that the various parties are nominating candidates with the idea of having all these candidates sit down at a negotiating table to present a single candidate who will guarantee victory and a return to democracy in Chile. That is what we hope, and I am certain that is the objective of the various candidates who have emerged.

[Moderator] Our colleague Pedro Margolles, director of the news agency PRENSA LATINA, has the floor.

[Margolles] Mr President, at the beginning of the news conference you mentioned the need to overcome the imperialism of science and technology. Do you believe the Latin American peoples have a right to new technologies and scientific achievements that have been denied them by the industrialized countries?

[Perez] That is the great issue of our times. Either we developing countries gradually acquire science and technology, or we will be more dependent than we were in the past. The industrialized countries have been selfish about giving us access to science and technology. They expect us to purchase science and technology in supermarkets; that is, they expect us to purchase the products that are the result of the scientific and technological process, instead of taking home that science and technology so we can make these products ourselves.

First of all, our countries must be firmly determined not to purchase technology in supermarkets. We must request and obtain technology transfer along with the goods we import from the industrialized countries.

That, however, will not be enough. We will always encounter serious obstacles. We must begin research in our countries, place a high value on science and technology in our centers of higher and university education, and allocate a percentage of our GNP for science and technology. I have pledged to increase the budget allocation for science and technology to 2 percent of Venezuela's GNP. I will also promote exchanges with the developed countries, especially those in Latin America, to ensure that we do not duplicate our efforts and that we establish broad cooperation in this field, which will permit us to advance more rapidly, especially in Latin America. I believe Europe has given us a great example with its Eureka project.

If we in Latin America fail to use both our economic and human resources for the development of science and technology, we will not enter the next century in a position to participate in the activities of the developed countries. This, as I said in my speech, is the great issue to which we Latin American countries must devote attention.

We already have some instruments that are not being used. In Trieste, for example, the Italian Government is providing great cooperation with the developing countries through the Third World International Academy, the theoretical physics research centers, and other technological centers. Latin American professionals and scientists are being trained there. I believe that we should recognize the importance to these initiatives, for which we must thank the Italian Government.

We have here among us in Venezuela, at the invitation of my government, a wise man who won the Nobel Prize for physics: [name indistinct], who heads those institutes at Trieste. We have established large-scale cooperation with those institutes so that Venezuela can also benefit from this. That is the slogan of our times: Science and technology for the Third World.

[Moderator] Many outstanding fellow newsmen came to President Perez' inauguration from many parts of the world. One of them made a very long journey: He is Joseph Corro from Tanzania's SHIHATA News Agency.

[Corro, in English] Your Excellency, the South Commission, of which you are a committee member, has called for the cancellation of official loans to low-income countries whose debt problems cannot be resolved through rescheduling. You were also recently quoted as saying that there is a need to create a multinational agency which would buy developing countries' loans at a discount to help ease their debt problems. How have the industrialized countries received these appeals, and what further options exist for the indebted countries to solve this problem? [Interpreter translates question]

[Perez] Europe, through President Mitterrand, has proposed a radical solution for these lower-income countries: writing off their debt. We fully agree with this position. The plan to significantly reduce the debt that we have presented—and which is supported by many organizations in the industrialized world—has the advantage of covering all debtor nations, including the poorest ones. Within this framework, the poorest countries could make token payments or even have their debt written off. We believe this is indispensable. The foreign debt has placed Africa in an even tougher situation than Latin America. We are maintaining this position within the South Commission and we hope to promote a dialogue among debtor nations to strengthen our negotiating position.

As I said, we do not yet see clear signs that we might be able to reach a solution soon. However, I will say something that might make many of you laugh. In the fifties, while I was exiled in Cuba during the dictatorship of Perez Jimenez in Venezuela, the Cubans had a saying about situations that had become such crises that they no longer could be ignored. They said: Things are good because of how bad they are becoming. I believe we might have to say the same thing here.

The crisis has become so bad that we can no longer wait. We must find a solution to the debt problem through understanding and dialogue. Tanzania is now playing a very important role, because former Tanzanian President Julius Nyeyere is the Third World's leader on the debt problem and on problems facing the South.

[Moderator] Colleague Rita Ganem is next. She is from an important television station, Mexico's Televisa.

[Ganem] Mr President: If the United States has shown a change of attitude toward Latin America, how can we interpret the refusal by Vice President Quayle to take this opportunity to meet with Fidel Castro and, above all, with Daniel Ortega, who is a key player in the Central American conflict? And on another topic, oil, do you have a joint strategy with Mexico and Ecuador? Thank you.

[Perez] I think the problem of U.S. relations with Cuba and Nicaragua is the result of a series of incidents over several years. In this climate of international detente, we must hope that dialogue will be resumed between Cuba and the United States and between Nicaragua and the United States. I think we are headed in that direction. I do not dare voice criticism of Vice President Quayle's conduct. Quayle was acting according to what the United States has defined as its relationship—or lack of relationship—with Cuba and Nicaragua up to now. We hope...[changes thought] I think Vice President Quayle's statements provided important hints as to the subtle changes that will take place in U.S. policy in Latin

America. We must not forget that Cuba has played a leading role, with the support of the United States, in two important things in southern Africa: the affirmation of the sovereignty and liberty of Angola, and an extraordinary role in the liberation of Namibia and the creation of a new southern African country. I believe these are signs that the world will be rid of the abominable and frightful racial discrimination, which should receive the same punishment Nazism did.

As for the petroleum issue, I am very enthusiastic about the results of the conference between OPEC and non-OPEC countries in London on 26 January. Mexico attended this conference. We could say that great cooperation has begun between OPEC countries and non-OPEC countries such as Mexico. I also agree that Latin American countries such as Mexico, Ecuador, Venezuela, and Colombia should establish a system outside of OPEC to promote more active cooperation in the field of petroleum production.

[Moderator] Colleague Guillermo Rodriguez from Radio Caracol of the sister Republic of Colombia.

[Rodriguez] Thank you. Mr President, from now to the end of your term, Colombians who meet you would like to avoid having to raise the issue of the disputed territorial limits. Perhaps it is timely to consider what former President Gonzalez said some time ago. He said that 1992, the 500th anniversary of Europe and America, could serve as the framework to resolve these conflicts, which were created by the liberation struggles or by legal problems stemming from the new Law of the Sea. Do you think, Mr President, that we will not have to ask you again about the dispute? Will it be possible to resolve this issue by 1992 or by the time you end your term in 1994?

[Perez] I would ask the question in a reverse manner: Will the Venezuelans have to ask the Colombians about the same issue? [laughter, applause] I think that the document President Barco and I signed paves the way to begin to effectively and sensibly study the problems that affect our relations. I am convinced that these problems hinder and prevent the integration processes that are indispensable to solving Latin America's problems. This is a historic need. Our intellectual, political, and business circles—all of Venezuelan and Colombian society—must assume the responsibility of creating a public awareness that the problem has to be solved. This is not only the government's responsibility, but the responsibility of anyone who holds any kind of position of leadership in each of our countries.

I have a very clear position on this. I fervently believe in integration. I have proposed clear solutions to this problem. I had the good fortune to promote important initiatives that helped solve the Panama Canal problem. I helped begin an integration process among Colombia, Costa Rica, and Panama to strengthen Latin American actions regarding the canal. I was fortunate enough to have had a leading role in solving the Beagle Channel dispute between Chile and Argentina, preventing the frightful war that was about to be unleashed.

I believe Venezuela and Colombia have a historic duty to resolve our differences. Both countries must do so. Therefore, we will appoint two high commissioners from each country to tackle this issue. I also plan to meet with representatives of our country's intellectual, journalistic, economic, and academic life to create an awareness in Venezuela about the need to solve this problem. Hopefully the 500th anniversary of our hemisphere's discovery will be celebrated in Latin America and Spain with a positive desire to solve problems and to open new horizons as we prepare to enter humanity's 3d millenium.

[Moderator] Over 1500 newsmen from different countries covered Carlos Andres Perez' inauguration. One of them came from a distant country. He is Indonesian colleague (Pati Rayaguani) of the OPEC News Agency.

[(Rayaguani), in English] Mr President, at the meeting you held early this week at the Macuto Sheraton Hotel with several oil ministers, the possibility of contacts between oil-producing and consuming countries was discussed. How will these contacts materialize? Will this be an OPEC initiative? Thank you. [Interpreter translates question]

[Perez] The OPEC countries did not hold a formal meeting in Venezuela. Because so many OPEC oil ministers were present at my inauguration, I was very glad to invite them to lunch. I wanted to show the importance Venezuela attributes to our relations with the OPEC countries. During this informal meeting, we talked about the problems OPEC is experiencing. As a matter of fact, all of us feel very optimistic, because a new international climate to deal with the oil problem is being fostered. I believe the OPEC countries must accept the fact that we have made mistakes. The large countries are accepting the fact that oil price instability hurts the oil consumers—the large, industrialized nations.

Therefore, we now see a new climate of understanding between OPEC and major consumer countries. OPEC will not make the mistake again of abruptly raising oil prices, which caused an active competition and the subsequent steep drop in oil prices in the 1980's. OPEC has learned the lesson that it is advisable to stabilize the price of oil under terms that are not disadvantageous for either producers or consumers. With the sole exception of the United Kingdom, the oil-exporting countries understand the advisability of joint actions among OPEC countries.

At the London meeting on 26 January, the technical framework for cooperation between OPEC and non-OPEC countries was established. The talks among all the oil producers have already begun.

I must say that in my talks with leaders of the industrialized world, such as President Bush and some European heads of state, I noticed that the atmosphere is favorable for maintaining stable oil prices and for stopping the confrontations of the past between OPEC and the consumer countries.

Of course, there is an in-depth problem, and OPEC is called on to assume the leadership on behalf of the Third World countries. The history of mankind has always shown that countries producing raw materials are not expected to set the prices of their products and labor force. That is the privilege of the industrialized nations. OPEC must lead the way in ending this absurd and unjust discrimination, which subjects us to the manipulations of the major international markets.

It would be very appropriate if OPEC's struggle were to lead to the future formation of organizations, such as the existing coffee and sugar organizations, where producer and consumer countries set the prices of raw materials by mutual agreement. This is part of our struggle for a new international economic order. This concept is again gaining strength in the late 1980's, following the UN declaration on this issue in the 1970's. The diminished role played by international organizations in the last few years made us forget this concept. Now we must defend it and restart the struggle for a new international economic order. OPEC must also regain its leadership role in this struggle, which is fundamental for all the developing countries.

[Moderator] The next question will come from Pedro Gonzalez, who represents an important Spanish news media, Spanish Television.

[Gonzalez] In describing the problems that Peruvian President Alan Garcia has endured, you said the Latin American countries had fallen into the country-by-country negotiations trap set by the industrialized countries. Following that experience, is there an awareness that unity is necessary? How is that unity being promoted in practical terms, considering that the different countries have different debts and that negotiations with industrialized countries are difficult? Despite your enthusiasm and goodwill, do you not think that if this problem is not solved, totalitarian trends could emerge and sink Latin America in an irreversible process of poverty?

[Perez] Your question is very important and allows us to explain our position one more time. At the beginning an effort was made to discredit us by spreading the rumor that we had plans to create a debtors club; that is, a club of scoundrels who would look for a way not to pay their debt. This would be like calling the seven industrialized countries a club of exploiters or usurers. We believe the Group of Seven is a good initiative by the industrialized world in the framework of cooperation for economic development. That group permits coordinated policies among the industrialized countries and allows us to know what to expect, and this is important for us.

We also believe, however, that Latin America must have the same objective and learn from that example. Latin America must form a group such as the Group of Eight to discuss the region's major problems and to strengthen our position in negotiations with the industrialized nations. This is what we think about the group that was created in Acapulco.

As for the foreign debt, we do not imagine that it can be negotiated collectively. Each country has its own way of doing things. The real economy of each country is different. Each country's ability to meet its commitment is different. Each country owes its debt to different banks. Thus, it would be impossible to conceive of a collective negotiation of the debt. What we would like is to collectively set an overall global framework for the payment of the debt. That is our objective. Once this framework exists, each country will discuss with its creditors the way the debt will be paid. I am convinced that if no solution to the debt problem is found in 1989, Latin American democracy will be seriously threatened by political destabilization, which is already evident and which is a result of the growing misery of our nations.

Paying the debt has resulted in fewer schools, less food for children, fewer opportunities for development, and fewer roads. We have seen the opportunities for progress in our countries fall apart. We have seen a deterioration in our peoples' living conditions. Poverty has spread throughout Latin America. Malnutrition is again afflicting the majority of Latin American children.

[Moderator] The next question will be asked by an old friend, a colleague who left Venezuela and who is now working in London: Kim Fuad of PETROLEUM INTERESTS magazine.

[Fuad] Mr President, with regard to Venezuelan oil, will your government seek preferential U.S. market treatment, which is the formal and informal status of the treatment given to oil from Canada and Mexico? If so, would preferential treatment by the largest world oil market fit in the framework of Venezuela's commitments within OPEC?

[Perez] There is no preferential U.S. treatment for Mexico and Canada. It is fair to acknowledge that the conditions for all the countries are the same. Mexico sells the United States oil for its strategic reserves. Venezuela has received the same offer from the United States. What happens is that we voluntarily went along with OPEC quota agreements, and our oil is committed to contracts with various countries, including the United States. For this reason, we cannot sell oil for the U.S. strategic reserves. We have received the same offers that other countries have.

U.S. presidents, including President Bush, have also assured us that our countries will not be treated differently.

[Moderator] To conclude President Perez' first news conference, I am honored to present a great correspondent, UPI Latin American correspondent (Herman Bills).

[(Bills)] Thank you. On behalf of all the foreign newsmen, I want to thank you, President Perez, for all the attention we received during the inaugural ceremony. Venezuela has been kind to welcome us, and we have had a good week here. My question has to do with drug trafficking and drug abuse, which are among the worst plights affecting the continent, not just Latin America. Did you discuss this problem and ways to deal with it during your talks with your colleagues?

[Perez] Allow me to reiterate the gratitude of all Venezuelans for your presence here. I think your visit is not only appropriate but also creates a new hope for Latin America. We have often complained that the industrialized nations do not understand the situation in our countries. We have thought the only way to maintain relations with the industrialized countries is through direct talks, especially with the representatives of the major international news media. On several occasions I was surprised—as I was during the election campaign—to have newsmen from major newspapers, magazines, and television networks asking me the most absurd questions. They showed a lack of understanding of our situation.

That is why I am happy with your presence. I want to say the following: Throughout my administration I will invite newsmen from different regions to come here to discuss concerns and learn of our ideas and goals. I also pledge to gladly grant requests for interviews with any newspaper from anywhere in the world. I will welcome your arrival in Caracas. I want to say this to convey my profound gratitude for your presence here. Ladies and gentlemen, the topic the UPI correspondent mentioned is truly very important and urgent for all mankind, not just Latin America. The problem of drug trafficking is becoming a threat to the national security of our nations. It is turning into the most far-reaching international crime in the world.

I remember how impressed I was during a visit to Malaysia to attend a meeting of the South Commission. Every day I read newspaper reports of executions. I learned that Malaysia—besieged by the problem of drug trafficking—established the death penalty for drug traffickers under very strict rules, so it is impossible to delay or review such sentences. These sentences must be carried out at once. I do not think this is the solution. However, I mention it as an example of the extent of the drug trafficking problem. What is regrettable is that we have created a useless debate and an unnecessary and absurd confrontation by telling the United States that here in Latin America, or in this hemisphere, the United States is the one financing and consuming drugs, and therefore this is its responsibility. The United States, in turn, is telling Latin America that we are the ones responsible for planting and harvesting drugs, therefore we must guarantee that these drugs will not be produced. Both are absurd and irrational attitudes.

The importance of the U.S. market accounts for the widespread drug trafficking in the region. The money involved in the U.S. market—which is greater than in the international oil market—undeniably is the motivation for this activity. There is no doubt, however, that our countries bear a similar responsibility, because it is here that the drugs going to the major international markets—mainly to the United States, although they are also sent to Europe—are planted and sold.

I support the idea of holding a hemispheric summit. All of the hemisphere's countries should meet to establish a policy and sign treaties that will allow joint actions regarding the foreign debt.

The sovereignty issue is becoming—because of the way we have been handling it—the great excuse for our problems and the main accomplice of the region's drug traffickers.

Such a hemispheric conference could also be the basis for a world conference on the drug trafficking problem, in view of this problem's worldwide threat. Drug trafficking is a degrading process threatening the future of mankind like a new atomic bomb. Moreover, the idea of making drug trafficking legal—and of creating regulations such as those on the production of pharmaceuticals—has been proposed in desperation, because it has not been possible to face drug trafficking. One hears very intelligent, capable people saying this; one even hears people from some important institutions saying this. I have never heard a more outrageous and horrible thought than this. Drug trafficking cannot be made legal. We must jointly face the drug trafficking problem.

I believe that one important topic at a meeting between the Group of Eight and President Bush could be not only the debt problem but also a basic problem of the United States: the drug problem.

Thank you very much to all of you. I feel very happy for sharing this moment with you. [applause]

Perez To Seek Entry Into NOAL, GATT

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[Article by Jose Egidio Rodriguez: "Venezuela Will Join the Nonaligned Movement This Year"]

[Text] Venezuela will finally join the Nonaligned Movement [NOAL] this year.

During a meeting with Yugoslavia's president, President-elect Carlos Andres Perez reiterated the desire to formalize Venezuela's participation in the NOAL, at which it is currently an observer.

It is said that Perez will travel to Belgrade in September to the organization's annual meeting.

The decision to join is part of the Perez government's new foreign policy strategy.

Our sources point out that there will be important changes, with added emphasis on horizontal relations with countries with which Venezuela has common interests.

The new strategy is an effort to change the course and intensity of those relations.

Until now, and especially during President Lusinchi's administration, there was emphasis on vertical relations, especially with the United States.

The United States, of course, will continue to be a priority area and our relationship with that country may even be strengthened because the Bush administration is expected to be more open to Latin American ideas.

The main foreign policy lines already drawn by the government that will be installed on 2 February, and President Perez' recent trip to the Middle East, with stopovers in Bonn, Zurich, Madrid, and Paris, reveal the direction to be followed.

There will be better relations with Middle Eastern countries; there will be an opening up to Africa; there will be greater emphasis on global negotiations to discuss the foreign debt as well as to confront problems common to all the Third World countries.

Cooperation with the Caribbean nations will be broadened, with increased interaction with countries like Jamaica and Trinidad; there will also be deeper relationships with Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina.

As for Colombia, the perception is that there will be a strengthening of ties with Venezuela's neighbor through the development of joint projects and activities and mutual benefit programs in the economic field.

Venezuela will also take the first steps toward participation in the GATT. During his recent Middle East tour, President Perez is said to have already selected his negotiator for Venezuela's adherence to the GATT.

International policy will again play the tune of Third Worldism. According to the guidelines, every effort will be made to avoid repeating problems of the past.

It is not a matter of returning to the theories of the sixties, but of restructuring the basic objectives: the need to change the international trade structure, to restructure the financial system, and increase cooperation among South American countries.

This, of course, will require a broad, medium-term effort.

Perez will inherit many unresolved foreign policy issues, and some of these will force changes in our foreign policy. The most important of these issues is the foreign debt.

Our sources have pointed out that Venezuela, through the Foreign Ministry as well as other organizations, will seek rapprochement and openings with countries that had been banished to a second-class status in our foreign relations.

Even though the foreign debt issue and the economic adjustment program—which aims to broaden the range of exports—have gained a political dimension, everything indicates that the new government's foreign policy will more actively promote economic interests through better planned actions by the organizations involved: PDVSA [Venezuelan Petroleum, Inc.], Cordiplan [Office of Coordination and Planning], the Venezuelan Investment Fund, the Finance Ministry, and CVG [Venezuelan Corporation of Guayana].

For the time being, the president-elect has been speaking with leaders of both the Third World and the industrialized countries as part of that new international policy.

In the FRG, for example, Perez requested greater assistance to Latin America and Venezuela through funds for cooperation programs, new investments, and help with the foreign debt negotiation.

Within the next few months, Venezuela should be receiving visits from private investors from Europe and other parts of the world, as well as several official missions that will fine-tune conditions for sending experts or financial aid. This reorganization of our foreign policy, however, will require greater and better efforts from those working at the Foreign Ministry and at the institutions listed earlier.

Some officials will be promoted; others will be transferred to positions where they can better use their talents; and those who only shuffle papers from one drawer to another will be demoted.

Our sources agreed that the mechanisms that will be used to develop foreign policy will be less formal than those currently in place.

One of our sources said it is a matter of using less but more pragmatic rhetoric, which will make it possible to promote the country's comparative advantages in commerce, tourism, finance, and politics.

One source said that a good part of the solution to Venezuela's internal problems lies abroad.

Another analyst said the emphasis Carlos Andres Perez plans to place on his government's foreign policy creates the risk of Mexicanization.

Mexico's image abroad is very different from its domestic reality. Due to its traditional need to reaffirm its identity, Mexico is always opposed, at least in public, to the United States.

Since a drastic economic adjustment program—beginning with social programs—is on the way, Venezuela could become increasingly vocal at international forums to counter this program's domestic impact.

This, in the opinion of one of the architects of our foreign policy, is not the new government's intention. There will be, he said, a change in emphasis to fewer myths and more pragmatism.